

# Talking Machine

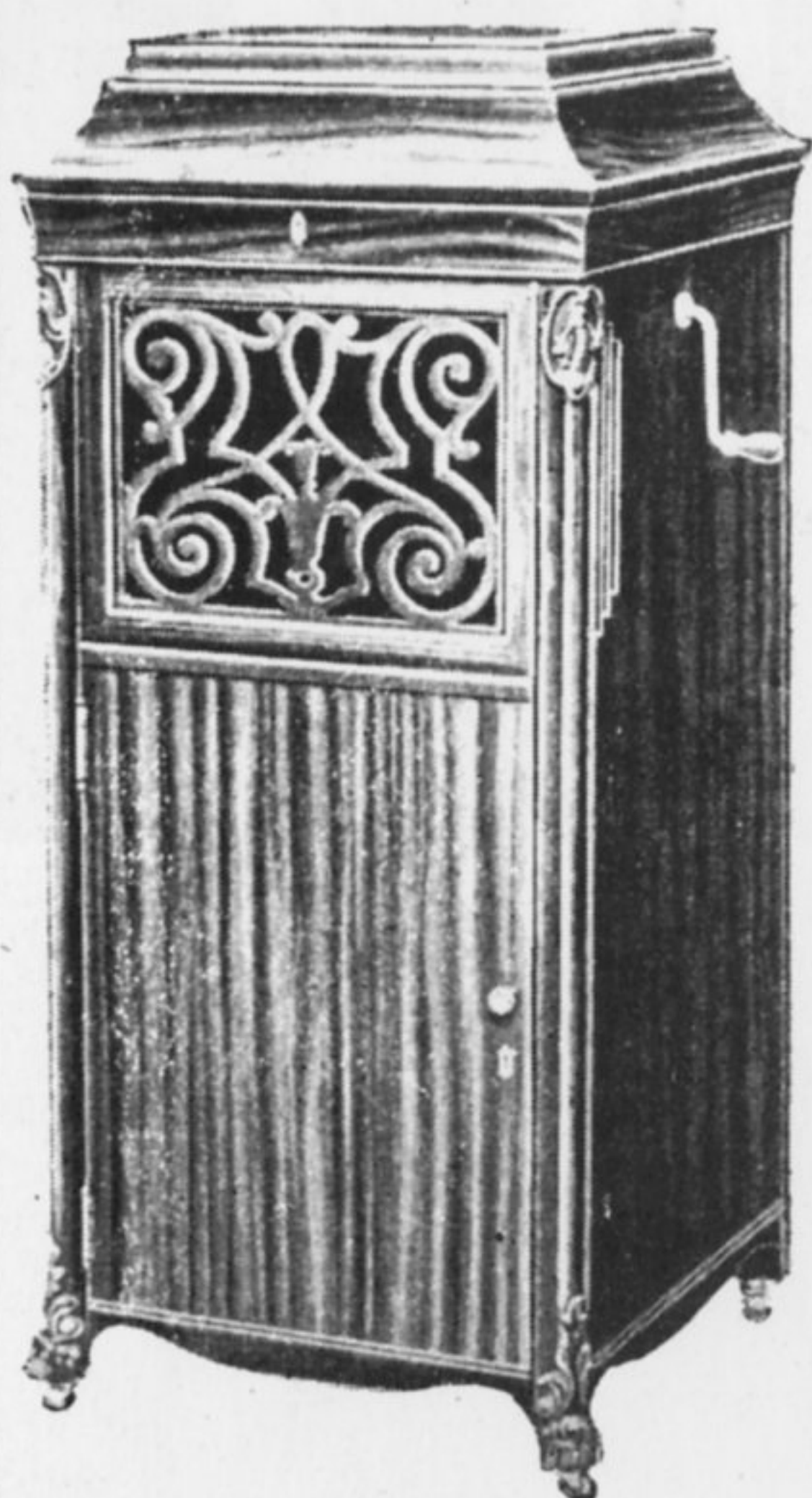
## Review 87

Summer  
1994

London  
£3.00







Edison  
Amberola

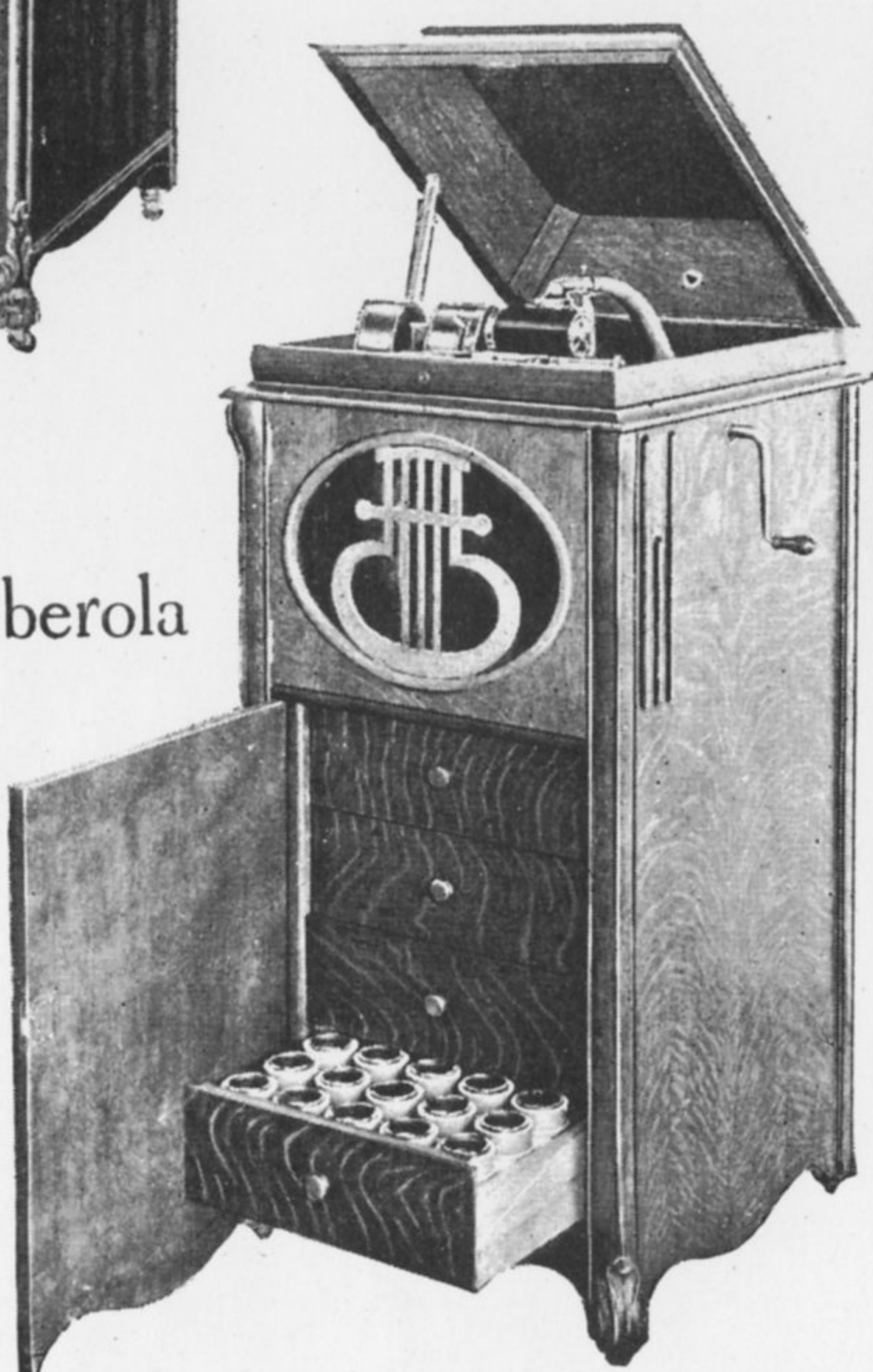
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Edison Amberola

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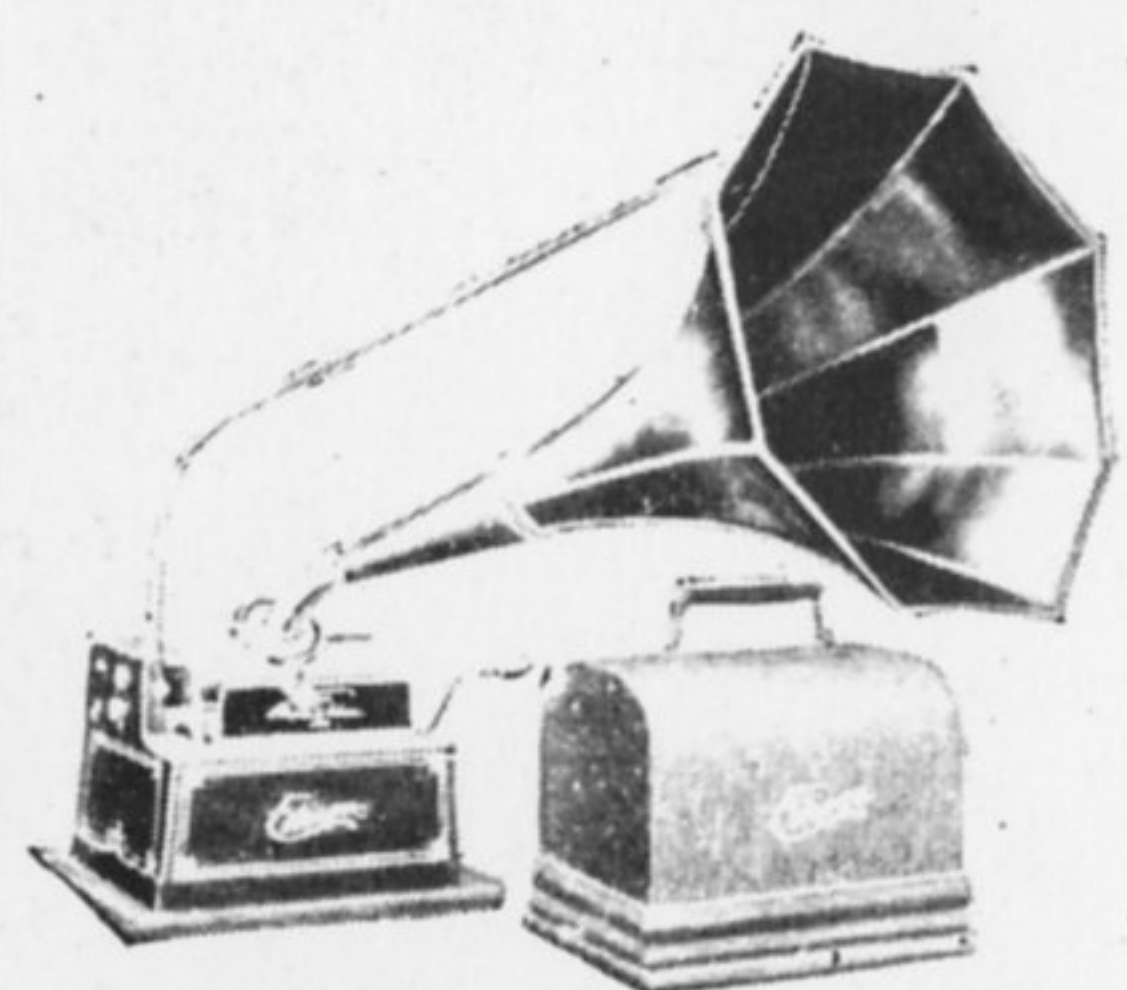


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Thomas A Edison

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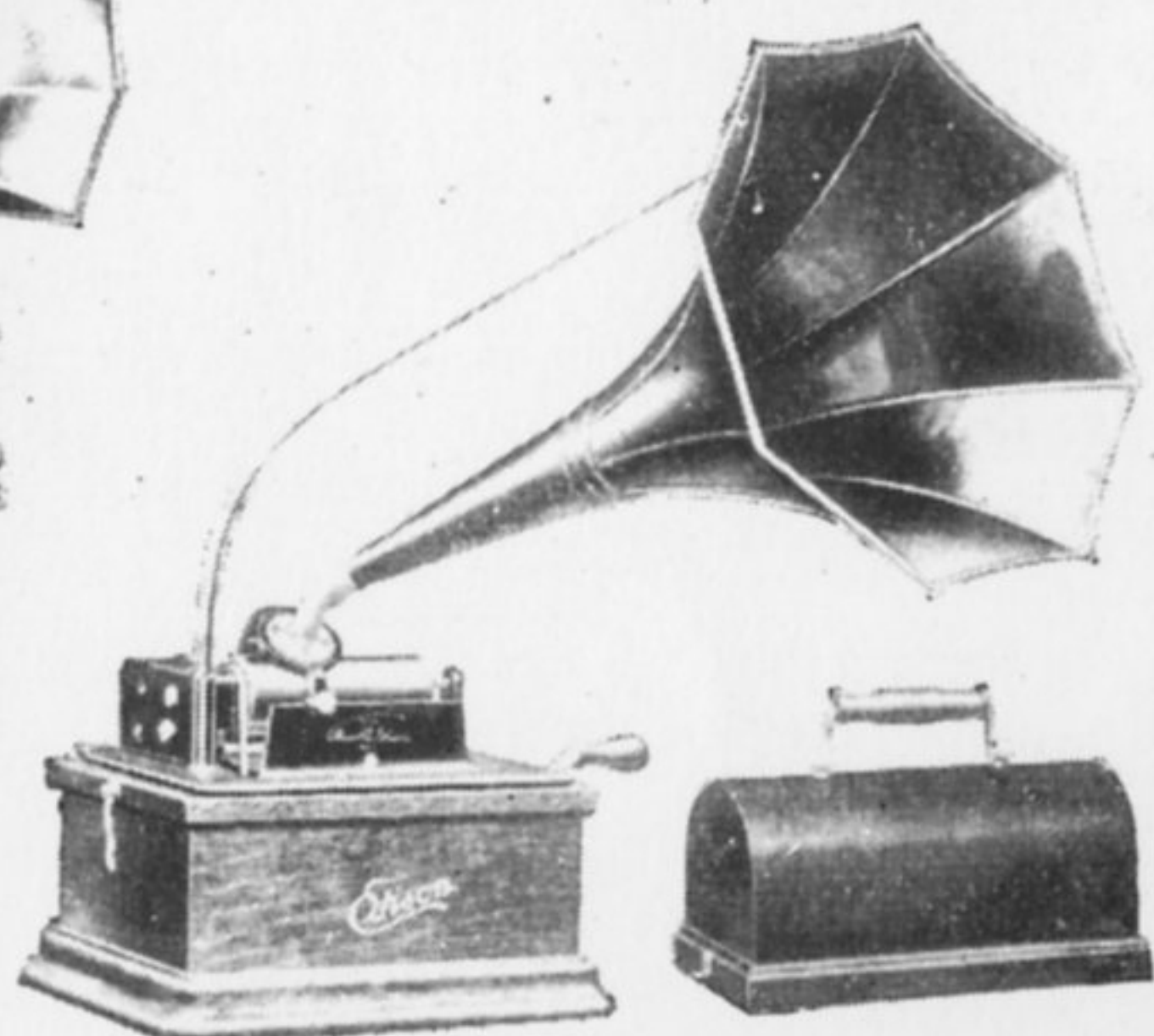
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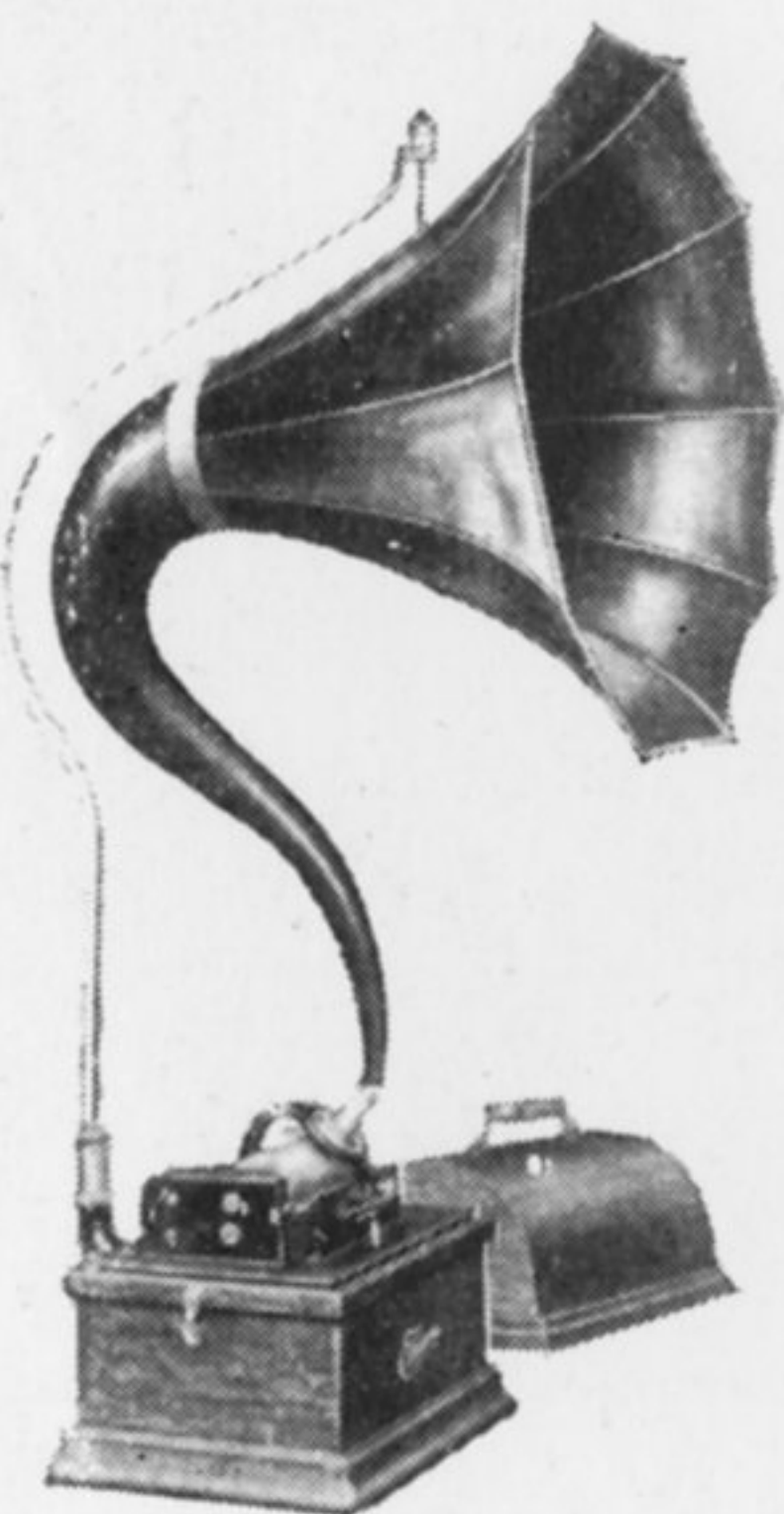
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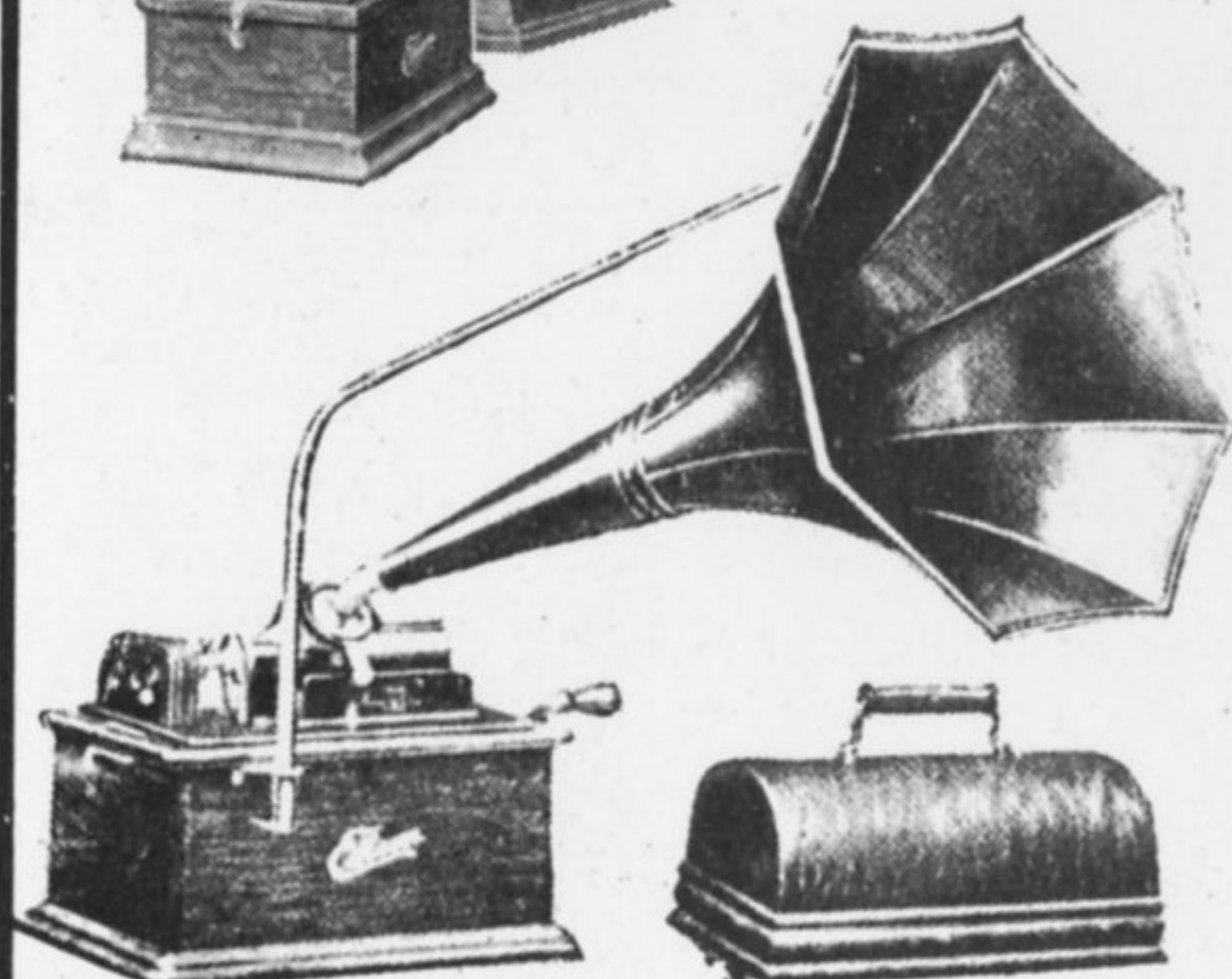
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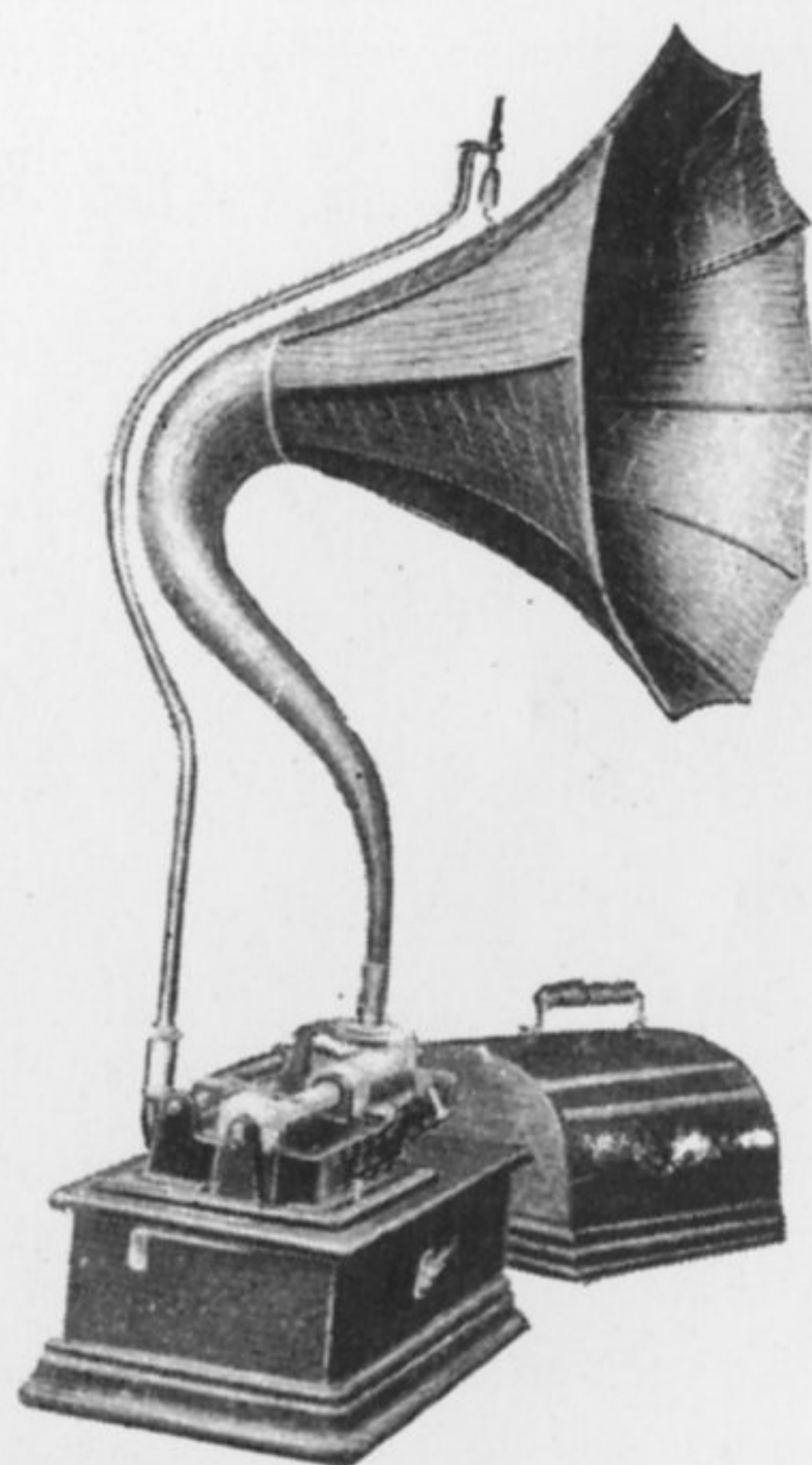
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£5 15 0



Standard  
Phonograph  
(Cygnet Horn)

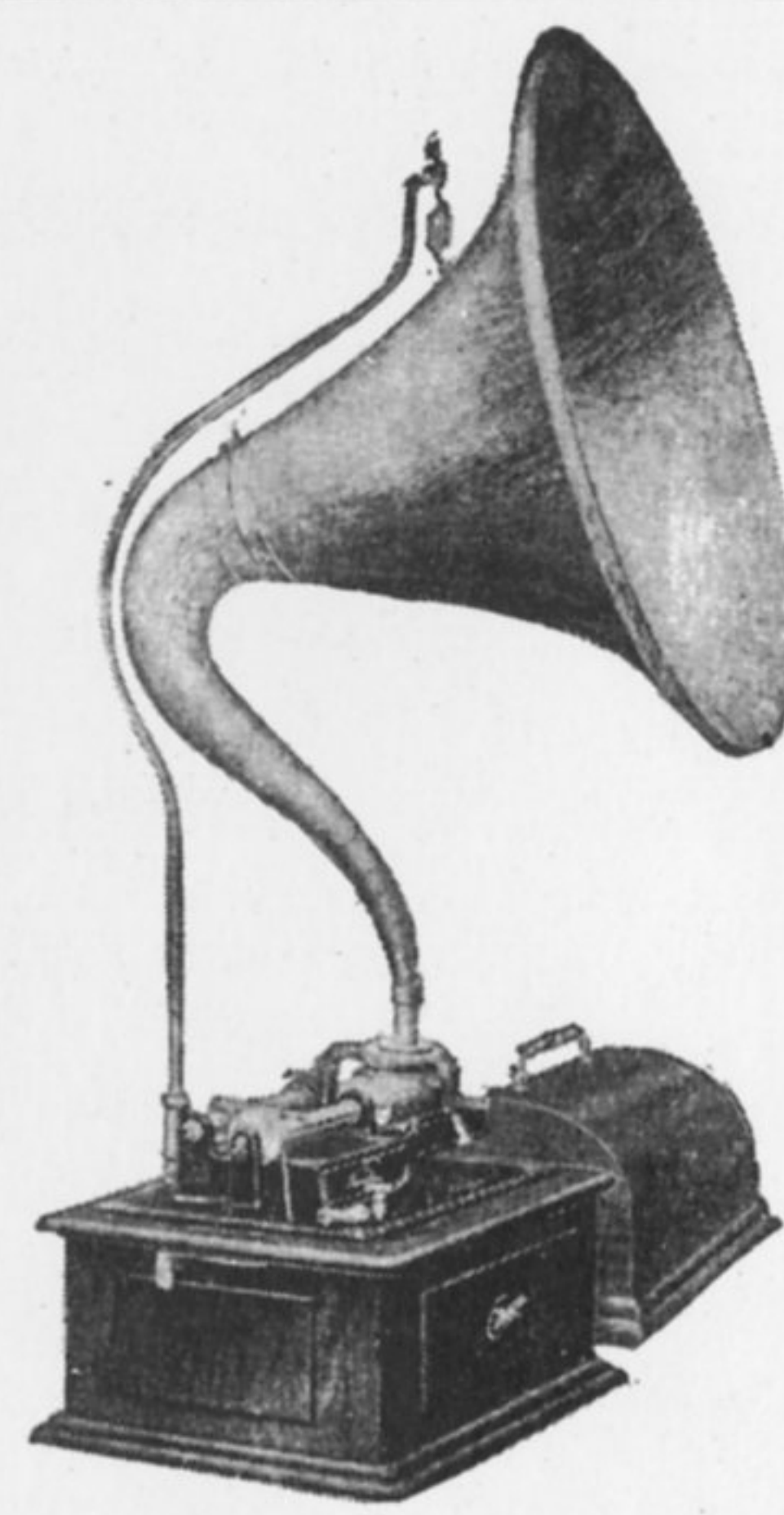
£6 16 0



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(Oak Music Master Horn)

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## Nipper's Bit

One of Master's friends who is a well known broadcaster and record collector in Paris has been dubbed 'Le Dinosaur' by colleagues on his radio station, just because he prefers shellac ("goumlac") to shaving mirrors (CDs). "Vive les dinosaurs!" - every one of you.

During a lull at a recent record fair I got into conversation with a rather charming lady who runs her own business, quite separately from her husband, although they both serve the collecting fraternity; she told me that more often than not gentlemen collectors when calling on the telephone will ask to speak to her husband rather than her, albeit the matter in hand is purely of her concern and not that of her husband's. Really gents (notice the lack of common courtesy here: I can be as rude as the next dog you know!), whilst Master and I both deplore most of the 'political correctness' forced down our throats these days, you can at least give equality credit and in future if you have to speak to the lady (whom I shall call Mrs. X.), then please do it direct and not through Mr. X.!

Regular contributor to this magazine Ralph Harvey, is as you may expect fluent in French, he is also a passionate adherent of the accordeon. Master has just shown me a copy of the journal *Les Rois de l'accordeon*, published in Le Mans four times a year, Ralph is the British correspondent for this important musical magazine. If you are interested in the accordeon and read French, I suggest that you take out a subscription (98, rue Nationale, 72000 Le Mans), 60 FF per year.

Well, well, the wheel turns (almost) full circle. In the later part of the nineteenth century, a method of disseminating music, concerts, operas and plays direct from the performance, via a central exchange to the homes of subscribers was announced - The Electrophone. It is understood that some houses were equipped with the system within central London and that the system was working well into this present century, until the advent of the 'wireless' rendered it obsolete. At the time of its inception it was rumoured that various of the 'gramophone interests' - as a generic term, not a specific - were mindful of buying the Electrophone concern out in order to cease its operations and minimise any potential damage to their own business. Earlier this year, a company in London - Cerebus - announced that it would be launching a system using computer technology and the so called 'information superhighway' to enable subscribers to 'download' music (I use the term loosely) of CD quality from a database and into their homes. I see in the news paper placed on the floor of my kennel, that Sony is considering buying the Cerebus 'Digital Juke Box' - or striking a deal with them. However the managing director of Cerebus, Rick Adar is not so sure; he is quoted as saying - "I am not interested in being bought out by a major record company. It's imperative that Cerebus remains completely independent." - That's what they all said once.

NIPPER.

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Opposite: Edison British dealers' leaflet L1790

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# JUNKSHOPPERS' COLUMN

Arthur Badrock

## AMERICANS IN ENGLAND

From the earliest days a considerable number of American artists, both black and white, visited England and recorded here. Many also recorded in America but for some the records made here represent the only remaining examples of their art. It has always mystified me that over many years I cannot recall seeing any advertisements from American collectors wanting these records and, although the late Jim Walsh wrote about many of these artists in his column in the 'Hobbies' magazine as far as I am aware no American discographer has ever expressed any interest in seeing the subject tackled as a separate, comprehensive project. Let me hasten to explain that I am not talking about jazz and dance bands which have been well documented by Brian Rust but the many singers and singer/musicians who came here and recorded, some returning to the States and some choosing to remain here. I thought it might be useful to discuss some of them and, where discographical information has been published, to pinpoint where it can be found or where it is likely to be appearing at some time in the future. This is not intended to cover all the artists involved as my own knowledge is far from complete. Hopefully some of you will be able to add to my jottings and perhaps some researcher will tell me he has the project in hand and we can all help.

I'll start with a few of the real pioneers - in no particular order. Two single sided 10" Nicoles that I recently acquired are by STEVE PORTER and JOHN W. MORTON.

STEVE PORTER was born in Buffalo, New York in the 1860s, the exact year is in dispute. As well as being a singer he was also a recording engineer and came to England with Russell Hunting around the turn of the century. In 1902 he was recording engineer with the Indestructible Co. in Liverpool and the following year with the New Century Co. in London. He then joined Nicole and worked for them both in this country and in India, returning to America about 1906. The City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society have published a reprint of a 1905-06 Nicole catalogue which lists many 7" and 10" records by Porter, the earliest being 'There Ain't Another Daddy In The World Like Mine' on 7" 768 and 10" 5021, issued about February 1904. The one I found is 'Blue Bell' (1749xx) on 5573, issued in the autumn of 1904. Accompanied by piano Steve Porter sings of the soldier saying goodbye to his girlfriend 'Bluebell'. Porter's recorded repertoire also included comic songs such as 'I Want To Go To Morrow' and 'Varmer Giles'. After returning to America Porter recorded with the Peerless Quartet and the American Quartet. He died in 1936.

Michael Kinnear & Frank Andrews have been researching Nicole for some years but publication is still apparently some way off.

JOHN W. MORTON had been a member of the Moore and Burgess Minstrels, a troupe formed by a white American, George Washington 'Pony' Moore with Frederick Burgess as the manager. Burgess died in 1893 and Moore retired the following year, living at Moore Lodge, Finchley Road, North London until his death in 1909. The Moore & Burgess Minstrels gave their last performance at St Leonards Pier Pavilion in 1900 and some of the artists subsequently joined the Mohawk Minstrels. Morton's earliest recordings in this country are two Berliners made on the 15 August 1898 with Tom Birchmore, another member of the M. & B. Minstrels. 'Three Hard Questions' (1000) and 'Minstrel Dialogue' (1002). On the same day he recorded on his own 'The Man In The Moon Is A Coon' (2003). Further titles followed over the next two years.

Morton specialised in monologues on a variety of subjects from 'Trousers' to 'Mutton Pies'. The former title he did in August 1900 and again four years later, this time on Nicole for whom he recorded several titles, both 7" and 10". In the autumn of 1904 three consecutive 10" issues appeared - 5383 'Kiss', 5384 'On The Strand' and 5385 'Vacation'. The latter title, which I have, is again a subject he had talked on in a recording made in December 1900 and it would be interesting to compare the two versions. On 5385 Morton himself announces 'Nicole Record' before he begins his monologue with a joke - 'I have

often wondered which was the fastest, cold or heat, but when you come to think of it, heat is the fastest because anybody can catch cold'. I imagine this particular monologue was one he had brought over from America, the only changes being a reference to 'holiday' near the beginning and the name of Uncle Mike's country hotel being the 'Pig & Whistle'. In November 1904 two records by Morton appeared on Odeon - 2407/08 'The Tale Of A Cat'/'A Love Affair' (7 inch), and 32232/33 'Happenings'/'The Christmas Party' (10 inch). I know of no further recordings by Morton, nor what became of him.

(Details of his earliest recordings can be found in Brian Rust's list of 7" British Berliner, G & T and Zonophone records in TMR 63-64.) (Is this unavailable?)

[Copies of the magazine are now regrettably out of print, but I can offer abstracts of the listing as part of the TMR service to discographers and collectors; see elsewhere in this issue for further details. - Ed.]

## PETE HAMPTON

This singer appeared in the all black musical 'In Dahomey' in London in 1903 and toured throughout Europe over the next ten years. Rainer Lotz, the German author/researcher published an excellent 'preliminary bio-discography' of Hampton in the first issue of the Australian magazine edited by Ross Laird. (About 18 months ago). Hampton recorded for many companies, both cylinder and disc. The listing compiled by Dr Lotz was a very commendable effort, but incomplete, as he expected. I know that various collectors sent in additional information which Dr Lotz had hoped to include in a future edition of the magazine but as Mr Laird has moved from Australia to Hong Kong that now seems unlikely. Hopefully Bob Dixon and Howard Rye will be including Hampton in the next edition of 'Blues & Gospel Records'. (They intend to enlarge the scope of the book).

One word of warning - Coliseum 1432 'Ours Is A Nice House Ours Is'/'You Ought To Hear Him Now' is labelled Peter Hampton (comic) but on this occasion it hides the identity of Jack Charman.

## THE VERSATILE THREE/FOUR

A group of black musicians/singers who recorded seven titles for HMV in 1916, four of which were issued. 'Circus Day In Dixie' is my personal favourite and one can understand their inclusion in Brian Rust's 'Jaz Records' on the evidence of this title alone. From 1919 to 1921 they recorded 23 titles for the Winner label and they also took part in a session with English musicians playing standard fox trots. To the listing in 'Jazz Records' can be added Winner 3360 'Back To The Land Of Golden Dreams' (6397-1-2)/'Mammy O' Mine' (6398-1-2). 'The Yodel Dodel Doh' from 1921 was issued on Winner 3526 as Diplomat Orchestra. The other dance band items by the Anglo-American group will be fully documented in Steve Walker's forthcoming revision of his 'English Ragtime' book.

In April 1923 the group recorded four titles for Columbia - as these are not in Rust I'll give the details here -

73332	What Happens After The Ball?	CoE 3281
73333	The Dear Little Garden I Love	CoE 3314
73334	Oogie, Oogie, Wa, Wa	—
73335	Away Down East In Maine	CoE 3281

I have not heard any of the Columbias but I have most of the Winners and a fairly dire bunch they are.

Their only other recordings listed by Brian Rust are two unissued titles for Vocalion in 1926 after they had returned to America.

I'll deal with more Americans in England in future issues but just to show the traffic wasn't all one way I'll mention a couple of Englishmen who went to New York to make records.

## IAN COLQUHOUN

A Liverpool born singer who started out in pantomime in Leeds in 1895. He sang both in the music hall and on the concert stage. For a period he was principal baritone with the Carl Rosa Opera Co. He recorded extensively - the Gramophone Co., Edison Bell, Pathé Frères, Columbia, for Zonophone in Berlin, Beka and Odeon. In June 1906 he sailed from Liverpool to New York in order to record 25 titles for the Leeds Catlin Co. These came out on the single sided Imperial label and were imported into this country the following year and sold for 2 shillings each. I know of 8 titles between 45370 'The Death Of Nelson' and 45412 'Almost Persuaded' but there are obviously others. On the two which I have he is described on the label as 'Nature's Vocalist'.





ABOVE: *The Versatile Three*

### TOM CHILD

'England's Famous Tenor' as the Imperial labels described him was Colquhoun's companion on the voyage. Born in Calverley, Bradford in 1869 his background was one of church choirs - Harrogate, Leeds and York Minster.

With cylinder recordings for Edison Bell and the General Phonograph Co. he too went to New York to record for the Leeds Catlin Co. I know of three Imperials - 'I'll Sing Thee Songs Of Araby' (8720D) on 45397, *Take A Pair Of Sparkling Eyes* on 45398 and 'The Pilgrim Of Love' (8743D) on 45400, all three issued in England about July 1907. There must be many others.

### ERA

In *TMR 86* I gave some details of the English Era label which was pressed from Beka masters. Like many other labels from this period it had its continental equivalents. I recently noted two Italian Eras, again using Beka masters. The details might be of interest to operatic collectors and show that you shouldn't just look for Fonotipias and Milan G & Ts on your holidays.

#### ERA 42109/42110

42109 VORREI romanza cantata dal Signor A. Sala Tenore  
con accomp di pianoforte Milano  
42110 MADRIGALE IN DANZA (Pieri) -same-

#### ERA 42128/42146

42128 OCCHI DI FATA romanza (Denzi) -as above-  
42146 NON T'AMO PIU romanza (Tosti) -same-

### HELP WANTED

There are a few solo piano recordings on Broadcast and Rex labelled **LADDIE RAY**, one of which is alleged to be by Billy Mayerl, and the others it has been suggested are by Harry Bidgood or Peggy Cochrane. Does anybody have any concrete information as to whether Laddie Ray was a real person or a pseudonym?

**FRED GIBSON** has been suggested as a pseudonym for Tommy Handley or Leslie Sarony - neither of which do I accept. Fred Gibson was a comic who composed many of his own songs - his recording career stretches from Guardsman in 1916 to Homochord in 1929 via Winner, Aco and Broadcast. Although his name seems to be unknown



HARRY BIDGOOD

among music hall buffs he took part in some early variety programmes on the radio and it appears that he may have had a partner called Nance Haines. Does anyone have any biographical information at all on Fred Gibson?

A photograph or his picture on the front of a piece of sheet music would be a real bonus. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

### Harry Reser on Little Marvel

The details will I fear have to wait until the next issue as the tape and notes are temporarily missing. Sorry to keep you in suspense. AB.



JUNK SHOPPERS





# Doreen Harris

## John W Booth

Glamorous vocalist Doreen Harris, now in her 80th year, lives in the Variety Artistes Retirement Home in Twickenham - funded by the Grand Order of Water Rats : Doreen was a 'Lady Ratling' for most of her professional life- where she is now enjoying a comparatively easy retirement.

Originally teamed with band leader and cockney comedian Leon Cortez and His Coster Pals (also with His Coster Band), they made several recordings for Regal-Zonophone in the late nineteen-thirties. Doreen also lived with Leon for some twenty years until 1955 when she left him taking her young son with her. Leon had for many years ill-treated her and, she now admits, held back her career development as a popular solo vocalist.

To hear one of her recordings of a ballad such as *'Auf Weidersehn My Darling'* is to step magically to another era. Extremely favourable comparisons with the late Anne Shelton and Vera Lynn are easy to make, Doreen is proud to say 'I taught Vera', and as Dame Vera had two TV appearances in *Thus Is Your Life* so Doreen was among the guests who recounted their anecdotes on both occasions. One can but guess how far her star would have risen in the firmament if she had pushed herself more and not have been held back by Leon Cortez's jealousy. But a 'Star' she was. Making up for a lack of a great personnel repertoire in the record catalogues, she sang with many of the great British bands of the forties and fifties, both in the recording and broadcasting studios.

Under personal contract to EMI she made recordings with Reg Pursglove and His Music-Makers, Billy Thorburn, and others. Broadcasting for the BBC in her own radio series *'Remember Me'* which ran for four series of six-weeks each during the nineteen fifties in which she had Stanley Andrews as her musical director. Other stars appearing on her show included Maurice Winwick and His Orchestra, Sam Costa and Steve Conway.

Freelancing gave her regular work on radio, television, and stage - especially British traditional Christmas Pantomime, usually in the London area in order that she could be at home for Christmas Day with her family. Playing the lead as principal 'boy' (and for readers unfamiliar with the roles in old fashioned traditional pantomime, the 'Principal boy' was a lady, usually very glamorous and a good singer, who would appear to take a male role, although the glamorous thigh length boots or lurex tights rather gave away any illusions to even the youngest and naive. The 'Dame' on the other hand would be taken by a male comedian, characters such as Norman Evans or latterly the late Les Dawson, come to mind. But these were no travesties: parodies both, but not undignified or even dignified 'drag', just good old fashioned British panto humour of the kind threatened in these days of 'political correctness'. Doreen would lead audience singing in front of a large sheet of the words hung from the flies. I remember well just one such occasion, not 'panto' but a touring show, when - for the one and only time in my life I was asked to sing in front of a paying audience - by Doreen Harris (although I was only in short trousers at the time the occasion seems to have stuck in both our memories!).

Doreen was born in East Ham, east London, on April 16th, 1914 where her mother ran a troupe of child dancers. A near neighbour and contemporary was Vera Lynn. Doreen's mother fortunately for us, rejected Noel Coward's advice and did put her daughter on the stage - at the age of nine. By the time she had six months experience under her belt she was performing, illegally, as a professional soloist. The 'loan' of an elder child's birth certificate enabled her as a buxom lass to circumvent for a while the laws regarding child performers and touring shows. The deception couldn't last and it had to stop; the first of her career set backs.

When she reached fourteen and it was all legal, she teamed up twice for 'sister' acts with other girls. It was during this period that she met Leon Cortez who was at that time a theatre manager in Wandsworth, south London. She fell in love with him and they set up home together in a brand new flat and without the benefit of a marriage certificate. He soon took over the management of The Hippodrome Theatre in Greenwich, south-east London, economy was the watch word here and Doreen taught most of the front of house staff to dance as members of the stage troupe. Unfortunately another one

of life's downs occurred after a few good seasons and Leon got the sack. Lack of a regular income meant taking a smaller flat in nearby Clapham; and Doreen gave birth to her eldest son, Derek.

Fortunately Leon eventually found work as manager of a club in Brixton, south London, the tenure of which included a flat above. In spite of security and some small success here Leon had itchy feet and formed a band from professional musicians who had been reduced to playing on the streets of London. With a 'uniform' dress of costermonger's pearly suits, they looked the part of real Cockney costermongers.

The photograph opposite shows Doreen, Leon and the Coster Band in the costermongers' dress; a still from the British film *'Calling All Stars'*, made at Sheperton Studios in 1937 it also featured Flotsam and Jetsam (B C Hilliam and Malcolm McEachern), Ethel Revnall, Gracie West and Arthur Askey as well as many dance bands. [See discography for details].

Doreen admits that neither she nor Leon could read a note of music, but this never hampered them in their successes. Leon's Bands comprised good professional musicians and were more than capable of playing dance music as a perfect backing to her vocal choruses or to perform skits on popular classics, one of the specialities being a straight concert version of Sibelius' *'Finlandia'*. Jazz and Hot dance was also within their repertoire. Listening to, for instance, MR2883, *"Everyone must have a sweetheart"*, it is hard to realise that this was made in October 1938 and not in the middle of the 1940's Swing Era. This record was incidentally the first to bear Doreen's name in full as first credit, even if it was mis-spelt in the ledger and on the labels! (as Harriss *[sic]*)

During the second World War the band was from time to time disbanded, Doreen and Leon toured Britain as solo artists both in theatres and for E.N.S.A. entertaining the troops in Britain and overseas.

Peacetime and the last days of Variety. Leon and The Coster Pals toured until once again he grew tired of the act and disbanded, in favour of a solo act in which he performed 'cod' Shakespeare in his natural Cockney accent and gained much fame and reward as well as making some records. It was at this time when Doreen's own career took off, and as related earlier, could have made her more widely known abroad if Leon had not, as her manager, interfered with her potential bookings in America and Australia. But she was working regularly and broadcasting every Sunday in this country. In 1955 the tables were turned when Leon was booked for a tour of Australia and New Zealand.

Doreen had meanwhile met Canadian ice-hockey star Joe Durling, at that time manager of Streatham Ice Rink, and decided to marry. They stayed at Streatham for three or four years until the ownership of the ice rink changed. Joe and Doreen then decided to try the licensed trade and took over the "Woolpack" public house in West Croydon, Surrey for another three years. They, like many before and many since, found that a publican's life is not suited to everyone and so they left the pub.

Doreen had given up the profession for some time, by now aged 42, she never the less went to call upon an old friend Nat Gonella. Nat was appearing in an 'Old Tyme Music Hall' show in Wimbledon and Doreen was welcomed into the company.

Summer seasons, tours and regular six months seasons at the Tivoli, Copenhagen and a nearby night club, in Denmark kept her busy five times daily for seven days a week until her retirement in 1982 after the death of her husband Joe aged 68.

Anyone who has met Doreen will agree that her personality is one of great charm and friendliness, someone who has worked the halls, variety stages, panto and broadcasts in formats that are now non-existent. Her silky smooth voice is still heard today and is just as romantic as it ever was. Doreen deserves to be remembered with the same affection as are Dame Vera and Anne Shelton.

Doreen's style is still loved and listened to, I would hope that a new and wider audience will be (re-)introduced to her charming voice, David Rolfe remembers an evening when she sang at a Ratlings' Ball and brought the audience to their feet with *Buddy Can You pare aDime?*. Lastly thank you Doreen for your help and charm, and may you enjoy your retirement for many more, healthy, years.

I have prepared a discography of Doreen's records and wish to thank Gordon Compton, who started it all, David Rolfe for providing details of his collection. The staff at EMI Music Archives for their unfailing help, despite a couple of wrong tracks from me., and Km Durling.

JWB.



## Discography : Doreen Harris (soprano).

(Including recordings by Leon Cortez and His Coster Pals/Band issued without specific credits to Miss Harris).

Mx.	Title	Coupling/Catalogue Numbers:
		Britain India Ireland

### REGAL-ZONOPHONE

London. 9 October 1936.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals (Vocalist, "The Missus")**

CAR 4203-1 'Coster' Medley (No.1.) (vcl. DH) RZ MR 2197 FT 8151 IZ 487  
*[DH sings: It's a Sin to Tell a Lie; Sweetheart Let's Grow Old Together. LC - My Old Dutch]*

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals (Vocalist, "My Muvver-in-Law")**

CAR 4204-1 'Posh' Medley No.1. RZ MR 2197 FT 8151 IZ 487  
*[Tell Me Tonight; One Night of Love]*

London. 7 November 1936.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals.**

CAR 4304-1 Let's Have A Knees Up (Medley) -vcl LC DH RZ MR 2281 RZ MR 2257 FT 8172 IZ 527  
*[Let's Have a Jolly Good Time; Knees up Mother Brown; Auld Lang Syne]*  
 [MR 2281 - coupled with CAR 2304-1 a 1933 side by Frank Lee's Ceilidh Band]  
 [MR 2257 - coupled with CAR 4305-7 = ? by Frank Lee's Ceilidh Band ?]

London. 5 December 1936.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals.**

CAR 4342-1 Old Soldiers Medley (pt.1) RZ MR 2372 FT 8263  
*[Left, Left; Here's to the Good Old Beer; Rolling Home; If You Want to Find the Sergeant; I Want to Go Home; Old Soldiers Never Die.]*

CAR 4343-1 Old Soldiers Medley (pt.2) RZ MR 2372 FT 8263  
*[Form Platoon; What Did You Join The Army For!; Breaking Out of Barracks; Leap Frog; We're Here Because We're Here.]*

CAR 4346-1 Marie Lloyd Medley RZ MR 2307 FT 8221 IZ 552  
*[DH sings: A Little Bit of What You Fancy, Does You Good; Don't Dilly Dally On The Way; Oh Mister Porter.]*

CAR 4347-1 Gus Elen Medley No. 2. [vcl LC] RZ MR 2307 FT 8221 IZ 552  
*[LC sings: If it Wasn't for the Houses in Between; Never Introduce Your Dough to a Pal; 'Alf a Pint of Ale.]*  
 [mxs. CAR 4344, 4345 and 4348 were by Bram Martin on 5/12/1936]

London. 10 February 1938.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals. [vocals by DH & LC]**

CAR 4855-1 Lambeth Walk (from "Me and My Girl") RZ MR 2685  
 CAR 4856-1 Me And My Girl (from "Me and My Girl") RZ MR 2685

London. 10 February 1938.

**Leon Cortez and His Coster Pals.**

CAR 4865-1 Hit Requests (with vocal chorus): RZ MR 2726  
*When I Heard The Organ Play; The Girl In The Alice Blue Gown; Are You Sincere?.*  
 [coupled with CAR 4904 by Harry Leader as Wally Bishop & his band w vcl chorus]

CAR 4866-1 The Lonesome Trail Ain't Lonesome Anymore RZ MR 2705 FT 8528  
 [Coupled with side by London Piano-Accordeon Band, dir. by G. Scott-Wood, w vcl ch.]

London, 14 October 1938.

**Doreen Harriss [sic] with Leon Cortez and His Coster Pals.**

CAR 5128-1 Everyone Must Have A Sweetheart. RZ MR 2883  
 CAR 5129-1 I'm Sorry I Said I Love You. RZ MR 2883

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals.**

CAR 5134-1 Lambeth Walk Christmas Party. (pt.1) RZ MR 2899 FT 8645 IZ924  
*[The Lambeth Walk; Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road; They Built Piccadilly for Me; Knees Up Mother Brown.]*

CAR 5135-1 Lambeth Walk Christmas Party. (pt.2) RZ MR 2899 FT 8645 IZ924  
*[Let's All Go Down The Strand; Down at the old Bull and Bush; The Lambeth Walk; Knees Up Mother Brown.]*

## Notes:

For his recording sessions, Leon Cortez, in common with many other dance band leaders of the day, would augment his normal line up of musicians. Often selecting some of the finest players available at the time. It is therefore difficult, if not impossible to state with any certainty who the personell were, certainly there is no mention of them on the recording sheets.

The credited vocalist on CAR 4204-1 "My Muvver-in-law", was not Doreen Harris's mother. The title was given to a stock character in his band line-up.

Similarly on CAR 5424-1 "Little Judy" was played by a member of the troupe, sadly Miss Harris cannot now remember the name of the artiste.

Whilst another well known songstress may be thought of in connection with the annual reunions of the El Alamein [Veterans] Association at the Royal Albert Hall, it was in fact Doreen Harris who first sang the English version of *Lili Marlene* at the first of these events. She was the only female present!

Only the week of this magazine going to press and Doreen was approached by the BBC to make a live performance. Sadly for all her fans she turned the booking down.

The film **Calling All Stars** has not yet been seen in its entirety on British network television, but we can only hope that it will get an airing soon - in the full uncut 1937 version.

In the discography I have included all records made by Leon Cortez's band, regardless of whether or not Doreen Harris was the featured vocalist, as she would have sung in any chorus, and certainly participated in all the sessions listed.



London. 12th June 1939.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Band (vocal by The Guv'nor and the Boys).**  
CAR 5422-1 Beer Barrel Polka (roll out the barrel) RZ MR 3063 FT 8735

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Band (vocal by Doreen Harriss [sic]).**  
CAR 5423-1 Summer Sweetheart. RZ MR 3063 FT 8735

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Band (vocal by Little Judy).**  
CAR 5424-1 Birthday of the Little Princess RZ MR 3064  
[Miss Harris is unable to remember who this was, but she says it wasn't her.]

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Band (vocal by Doreen Harriss [sic]).**  
CAR 5425-1 Goodnight, My Daring, Goodnight. RZ MR 3064

London. 14 September 1939.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals.**  
CAR 5506-1 The Girl Who Loves A Soldier. (vcl LC) RZ MR 3136 FT 8768  
RZ MR 3158 \*  
CAR 5507-1 Old Friends Are Golden Friends. (vcl DH) RZ MR 3136 FT 8768  
CAR 5508-1 I'm Sending You The Siegfried Line. (vcl LC) RZ MR 3137 FT 8769 IZ 1009  
CAR 5509-1 The Old White Hoss. (vcl LC) RZ MR 3137 FT 8769 IZ 1009  
\* Indicated in the files as a Special issue.

London. 31 October 1939.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals.**  
CAR 5565-1 Sing Hulla Baloo Belay. (vcl LC) RZ MR 3184 FT 8824  
CAR 5566-1 Good Luck Until We Meet Again. (vcl DH) RZ MR 3184 FT 8824

London, 22 December 1939.

**Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals.**  
CAR 5636-1 When You Come To The End Of The Journey RZ MR 3202

London, Abbey Road, Studio No.1; 21 February 1946

**Doreen Harris - acc. by Reg Pursglove and his Music-Makers [a seven piece orchestra]**  
OEA 10874-1 Before You Break My Heart HMV BD 1127  
OEA 10875-1 Who Could Love You Like Me? HMV BD 1127

London, Abbey Road, Studio No.2; 27 February 1946.

**Doreen Harris - acc. by Reg Pursglove and his Music-Makers.**  
OEA 10889-1 Sweet Dreams To You. HMV BD 1125  
OEA 10888-1 Let By-gones Be By-gones. HMV BD 1125

London, Abbey Road, Studio No.2; 13 March 1946.

**Doreen Harris - acc. by Reg Pursglove and his Music-Makers.**  
OEA 10914-1 Grandfather's Clock. HMV BD 1136  
OEA 10915-1 When Alice Blue Gown Met Little Boy Blue. HMV BD 1136

London, Abbey Road, Studio No.1; 15 July 1946.

**Doreen Harris - acc. by Reginald Pursglove and his Music-Makers.**  
OEA 11150-1 There's No One But You. HMV BD 1140  
OEA 11151-1 When London Is Saying 'Good-night'. HMV BD 1140

London. Abbey Road, Studio No.2; 2 October 1946.

**Doreen Harris - with orch. directed by Stanley Andrews. \* [a 15 piece orchestra]**  
OEA 11226-1 Pretending. HMV BD 1146  
OEA 11227-1 Sweetheart, We'll Never Grow Old. HMV BD 1146  
[\* Reg Pursglove and his Music-Makers credited in catalogues and some lists]

Luton. [poss. The Alma] - on stage, 6th July 1952 **Radio Broadcast.**

acc. pno & organ. (with intro. and "Thank you Doreen Harris ...")  
1512/1/M Last Night; I Lived When I Met You. unpub. acetate  
1512/2/M Raindrops; You'll Want Me Back Someday; Auf Wiedersehn. --

London. 1 April 1953.

**Billy Thorburn, the Organ, Dance Band and Me. (BT pno)**  
CE 14490-3A What A Day We'll Have. (FT) -vcl DH Parlophone F 2514  
CE 14491-2A The Lambeth Waltz. (QW) -vcl DH Parlophone F 2514

London. 5 June 1953.

**Billy Thorburn, the Organ, Dance Band and Me. (BT pno)**  
CE 14612-2A Is It Any Wonder? (medium FT) -vcl DH Parlophone F 2518  
CE 14491-2A Just Another Polka. (QS) -vcl DH Parlophone F 2518

London. 12 June 1953.

**- and male chorus, with orch. cond. by Philip Green.**  
CE 14616-2C The Queen Of Everyone's Heart. Parlophone R 3714  
CE 14617-2C The Bells of Home. Parlophone R 3714

London. ca. April 1955.

**- with Jacques Leroy and his orch.**  
X 5050 Everlovin'. Embassy WB 127  
X 5051 Softly, Softly. Embassy WB 127

['Embassy' records were recorded and pressed by Oriole Records Ltd.,  
315-317 Oxford St., London for the British stores of F.W. Woolworth & Co. Ltd.]

## FILM:

Sheperston, London. 1937

*Calling All Stars.* (U) 75 mins.

Directed and Produced by Herbert Smith.  
(re-released in edited form 1945 by British  
Lion Films)

### Cast:

Davy Burnaby ... (Mr. Katz)  
B C Hilliam ... (Mr. Flotsam)  
Malcolm MacEachern ... (Mr. Jetsom)  
Arthur Askey ... (Himself)

with -

Ambrose and his Orchestra;  
Leon Cortez and his Coster Pals;  
Caroll Gibbons and The Savoy Orpheans;  
Eugene Pini and his Tango Band;  
Larry Adler;  
Allen and Broderick;  
Max Bacon;  
Billy Bennett;  
Sam Browne;  
Buck and Bubbles;  
The Canadian Batchelors;  
Leslie Carew;  
Billy Costello;  
Evelyn Dall;  
Turner Layton;  
Nicolas Bros.;  
Ethel Revnell and Gracie West;  
The Twelve Aristocrats;  
Elizabeth Welch.

(This film should not be confused with a  
similarly titled movie from Hollywood of circa  
1935.)

(c) 1994. John W Booth, TMR.





# Gabel's Automatic Entertainer

THE PHOTOGRAPH was taken by Paul Collenette from a recent Channel 4 tv showing of the film "Union Depot" (First National - Warner Brothers - Vitaphone 1932, released in Britain as "Gentleman for a Day" starring Douglas Fairbanks Jnr., and Joan Blondell.) 1 The story is based around lonely, lost, Joan Blondell, and conman Douglas Fairbanks Jnr's attempts to console her. Alas she don't wanna, but the next nickel in the slot plays a snappy foxtrot - "Million Dollar Baby" by Dixon and Warren, which has the desired effect.

The soundtrack music is probably Leo Forbstein's Vitaphone Orchestra rather than the actual (Brunswick) label record filmed on the jukebox. Warner Brothers films showed, naturally, Brunswicks in them, and RKO displayed Victors, as the record and film companies were affiliated the one with the other.

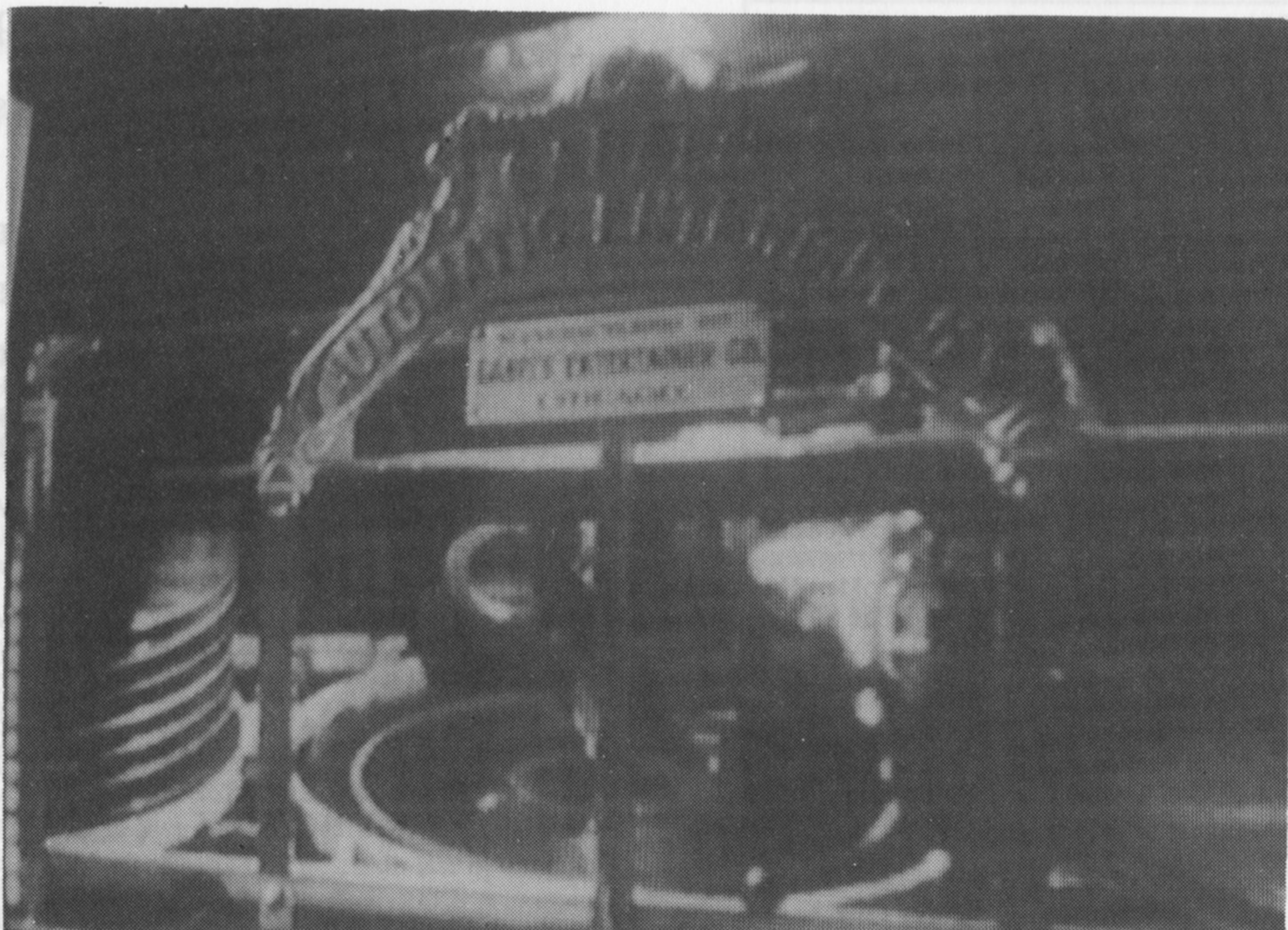
The rare Gabel machine shown in the film was an early electrical driven, acoustic juke box; unlike Gabel's first model which was an all mechanical - accoustic machine brought out in 1906 by John Gabel. As can be seen in the photograph, the legend plate claims it was a product of Gabel's Entertainer Co., but all references I can find agree with "Tin Foil to Stereo" (1976 ed.) this gives The Automatic Machine and Tool Company of Chicago as the makers; - did the company change its name or did Gabel change plants?. The original model had the following specification - 24 ten inch records arranged in two racks of twelve on either side of the turntable. Operation was by a single knob, selecting the disc, winding the spring motor, and changing the needle in a 150 needle cartridge. A screw feed carried the sound box across the record in the manner of a cylinder feed, this in turn was connected to a forty-inch long horn protruding from the top of the five foot tall oak and glass cabinet. The "coin-op" mechanism was fitted with a magnetic detector to eliminate the use of forgeries or "slugs".

The model in the film although electrically driven, appears to have a mechanical soundbox with steel needles, as in the pioneer machine described above, rather than a more-likely electric pick-up. It seems to be a sequential rather than a selector machine, housed in a 5ft. tall wooden cabinet with a glass front. Its styling resembled the Mills Violano-Virtuoso ( a roll playing violin/piano instrument, also made in Chicago ) with which it must have competed in its locations.

These old films tend to have more for the radio enthusiasts rather than the gramophile, but it is worth checking them out just in case they show any interesting machines.

Paul Collenette

1. [Whilst looking up the details of the film in a 1932 reference book I was amused to read that ... "In the crowd scenes of the above film were several well-known artistes, including Dickie Moore, Junior Coghlan, Claire McDowell, and others." Who? -Ed.]



## Imperial Scotland

from Chris Hamilton,

Dear John,

Arthur Badrock in his *Junkshoppers' Column*, TMR 86, mentions an Imperial oddity S111 by Tom Kinniburgh. This record was part of a special Scottish series on Imperial. So far I have traced 16 records in this series. There well may be more. Some of the recordings come from the main catalogue, but most of them appear to have been issued only in this Scottish Series.

I list the records I know about. Matrix numbers where known are shown.

[At this point I will interject that the listing given by Chris was passed by me to Arthur for comment, and after some correspondence between them Arthur and Chris have compiled the list printed on the next page. -Editor]

If anyone knows of any additions to this list, we would be grateful to have the details, these will be published in a later issue of TMR.

Best wishes,

(Chris Hamilton is the Editor of Hillandale News the official journal of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society.)

## The Chronophone

In 1902 Gaumont were using a sound film system called the Chronophone, namely a synchronization of gramophone records during projection mainly at the London Pavilion theatre. Among the artistes recorded was George Robey, the films were made at Dulwich, south London until 1913; Gaumont moved to newly constructed studios at Lime Grove in 1914.<sup>1</sup> Later rebuilt in 1932 the buildings became the home of BBC television for many years after WWII, remaining in use as TV studios by the BBC long after the opening of Television Centre in White City some few miles north along Wood Lane.

Has anyone seen or does anyone own a copy of one of these Chronophone records, and who made them? JWB.

1: Reference: *The World Film Encyclopedia*, London, 1933.



# THE IMPERIAL SCOTTISH SERIES

## S100

- 4469 TOM KINNIBURGH The March o' the Cameron Men  
4471 " They're Far Far Awa'  
Both rec. 7 Sep 1926

## S101

- 4467 TOM KINNIBURGH The Bonny Banks o' Loch Lomond  
4468 " The Lea Rig  
Both rec. 7 Sep 1926

## S102

- 4465 TOM KINNIBURGH The Bonnets o' Bonnie Dundee  
4466 " The Star o' Rabbie Burns  
Both rec. 7 Sep 1926

## S103

- 4508 DAN WIPER accordion with pno acc  
Highland Whisky /Strathspey/, Loch  
Leven Castle /Reel & Jig/  
4509 " High Level, The Thames (Hornpipes)  
Both rec. 13 Oct 1926,  
4508 also on Imp 1700 as Dan Wyper (correct spelling)

## S104

- 4500 DAN WIPER accordion with pno acc.  
Violetta Whiddons, Key West Hornpipes)  
4507 The Bridal, The Praities Are Dug (Jigs)  
(1) Rec. 11 Oct 1926 (afternoon) (2) Rec. 13 Oct 1926,  
also on Imp 1700 as Dan Wyper (correct spelling)

## S105

- 4498 DAN WIPER accordion with pno acc  
The Johnson, The Star, The Millicent's  
Favourite, The Rights Of Man. (Hornpipes)  
4499 Jessie Smith /Strathspey/Irish Reel Jig/  
Both rec. 11 Oct 1926 (afternoon)

## S106

- 4496 DAN WIPER accordion with pno acc  
The Miller Of Doon (Strathspey), De'il Amang  
The Tailors, Speed The Plough, Mrs McLeod  
(Reels)  
4497 Larry O'Gaff, Humours of Donnybrook, The  
Blackthorn Stick, The Swallow's Tail (Jigs)  
Both rec. 11 Oct 1926 (morning),  
4497 also on Imp 1701 as Dan Wyper (correct spelling)

## S107

- 4494 DAN WIPER accordion with pno acc Carcassian (sic) Circle  
4495 Roll Her On The Hill, Soldier's Joy, Clean  
Peastrae, Fairy Dance (Scotch Reels)  
Both rec. 11 Oct 1926 (morning),  
4495 also on Imp 1701 as Dan Wyper (correct spelling)

## S108

- 4960 Miss MURIEL MacGREGOR The Auld Scotch Songs  
4961 " Angus MacDonald  
The first (plain) takes were rec. 14 Sep 1928, takes -2 & -3 of  
both were rec. 10 Oct 1928 It is not known which takes were  
issued, Crystalate frequently used alternative takes

## S109

- 4958 Miss MURIEL MacGREGOR An Eriskay Love Lilt  
4959 " My Ain Folk  
Again first takes on 14 Sep 1928 and takes -2-3 on 10 Oct 1928

## S110

- 4956-2 Miss MURIEL MacGREGOR The Road To The Isles  
4957-2 " Hurrah For The Highlands  
Both rec. 13 Sep 1928

## S111

- 4954 TOM KINNIBURGH Annie Laurie  
4955 " O, My Love is like a Red, Red Rose  
Both rec. 13 Sep 1928

## S112

- 4707 TOM KINNIBURGH A Guid New Year  
4974 " Auld Lang Syne  
(1) First take rec. 4 May 1927, takes -2-3 rec. 22 May 1928 (!).  
Take(s) issued not known, almost certainly one from the  
1928 session (2) Rec. 20 Sep 1928

## S113

- 5347 EDDIE QUINN on his Campbell Kelso Accordion  
Kelso Barn Dance  
5348 Kelso Reel  
Both rec. mid Jan. 1930

## S114

- 5533 PIPE MAJOR J.D. MacDONALD (1st B'n HM Scots Guards)  
The Paps of Glencoe (March)  
5534 The Duchess Of Portland (March) The Shepherd's Crook  
(Strathspey), Miss Proud (Reel)  
Both rec. approx. Nov 1930

## S115

- 5531 PIPE MAJOR J.D. MacDONALD (1st B'n HM Scots Guards)  
Land o' The Leal, Lochaber No More (Laments)  
5532 De'il Amang the Tailors, Miss McLeod of Raasay, The High  
Road to Linton (Eightsome Reels)  
Both rec. approx. Nov 1930

## S116

- 5529 PIPE MAJOR J.D. MacDONALD (1st B'n HM Scots Guards )  
Happy We've been A'th'Gither (March), Maggie Cameron  
(Strathspey), The Grey Bob (Reel)  
5530 Flowers Of The Forest, After The Battle (Laments)  
Both rec. approx. Nov 1930

Thanks to Keith Chandler and Reg Hall who filled in the final missing details.

Swingtime  
50 George Drive  
Drayton  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR8 6DT

Dear Chris

1 July 1994

John Booth has sent me a photocopy of your letter to him of the 27th June - containing the listing of the Imperial Scottish series. This set me off on a little more digging and you will see my additions on the enclosed revised listing.

If perchance you have either of the Muriel MacGregors on S108 or S109 or the Kinniburgh on S112 perhaps you would take a look and see which takes you have. Crystalate takes are normally shown as, for example or , normally in the wax and sometimes also visible, handwritten under the label. Where Crystalate show a hyphenated number e.g. 4960-2 this doesn't normally indicate the take and its significance is not known.

Although Imperial catalogues often list odd series like the Taal, Dutch & Hebrew they never list the Scottish issues, which is odd as they would obviously sell more in England than Taal or Dutch.

John will be including your letter & listing in the next TMR



With the re-release of a new version of this Disney favourite, we couldn't resist reprinting this review from April 1938

## SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

You can hardly have avoided reading something of Walt Disney's "first full-length colour feature," which description is about as unattractive as the film itself is delightful. It is sufficient to remark that this truly amazing achievement of Mr. Disney and his staff of 570 artists is now running merrily at the New Gallery Cinema, London, and bringing joy to all who have seen it.

The most interesting point about the H.M.V. records taken from the sound track of the film is that they show, quite as clearly as the film, what an immense advance "Snow White" has made on its Silly Symphony and Mickey Mouse predecessors. For whereas these latter have had to be jammed with incident to compress them into 7 minutes of showing time, "Snow White" runs for 84 minutes, allowing plenty of time for the logical working out of sequences.

There is also less dependence on "funny noises," or at any rate a more judicious use of them, with good dialogue and some charming little songs. The music is by Frank Churchill and the lyrics by Larry Morey, both of whom deserve due acknowledgment for their contribution to the general happiness, since it is both apt and pretty, as well as an integral part of the entertainment.

The records give almost "straight" cuts from the film, mostly of vocal numbers with, of course, "effects," and a modicum of dialogue here and there. (Three 10 in. records in illustrated portfolio—H.M.V. BD514-6—6s. 6d.) Here they are :

### **With a Smile and a Song ; Dig-a-dig-dig-Heigh ho !** H.M.V. BD514.

Snow White having spent the night in a horrifically haunted forest, "comes to" as day is dawning and finds herself being watched curiously by the more pleasant variety of animals and birds. She tells them not to be frightened and asks what they do when things go wrong. One of the birds gives a cheerful whistle. This gives her the clue (or cue) to their philosophy that the best way to meet trouble is "with a smile and a song." After this they lead her to the Dwarfs' House.

The reverse side is concerned with the Dwarfs. First, in their magic mine, they sing as they dig out ready-cut diamonds of immense size. At five o'clock they cease work, and Doc. gives the signal "Heigh-ho!" which is taken up by the remaining Dwarfs. Softly the orchestra points the march rhythm, and off they go, singing, into the sunset.

It really is a most captivating marching tune with an effective *coda*, which is whistled. By all accounts the Oxford Crew have succumbed to its charms, for they were observed during their training period marching from their quarters at Ranelagh to the Boat House singing this song. As the average weight of the crew is 13 st. 2 lbs., one wonders whether (a) they adopted the Dwarfs' March in an endeavour to mislead any Cambridge Spies who happened to be about, or (b) if, having been rebuked for carrying too much weight, they sang it in a spirit of auto-suggestion. They sang it very well, having studied it with the H.M.V. record.

### **I'm Wishing ; One Song : Whistle While You Work.** H.M.V. BD515.

The wicked Step-mother Queen has made Snow White do the most menial tasks. She goes to draw water at the Wishing Well, and sings her "wish" that the one she loves will find her.



*Snow White decides that the dwarfs must wash before they have their supper*

The echoes answer her, and, lo, and behold, the handsome Prince having wandered along at that precise moment, sings *One Song*.

*Whistle While You Work* will probably be the hit number. It is sung by Snow White while, helped by birds and animals, she tidies up the Dwarfs' House, not before it wanted it. The orchestration is extremely clever, as indeed it is throughout.

### **Dwarfs' Yodel Song ; Some Day my Prince will come.** H.M.V. BD516.

The Dwarfs, having decided to allow Snow White to stay, in spite of Grumpy, sing their yodel song to their own accompaniment. The virtuoso on the drum is Dopey, the smallest Dwarf. The reverse side gives Snow White's contribution to the entertainment in response to a request "Now *you* do sumph'n." The Dwarfs, being set on a story "about Love," she tells them about herself and the handsome Prince who will surely find her again "some day."

In writing these notes, having already seen the film, it has been difficult to keep to the records and not enthuse on the details of the "colour feature." Still, if you see the film, you will want these records, which, though they may lack some of the balance of studio recording, more than make up for any slight deficiency in this respect by being the "real thing."

### **78RPM JAZZ BAND**

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# The Essex/ Squire Ragtime Banjo Bands. Edward S Walker

*Edward S Walker is a collector of ragtime records and has collaborated with others in writings on the subject, notably a biography/discography of Noel Pemberton Billing and his World Records, Fetherflex records enterprises. He says that he is not really a label and matrices specialist, his interest being more to establish who played where and when and with whom.*

**R**eading an obscure magazine *B.M.G.* published in London in October 1917, I came across the following advertisement on page 3:

## CLIFFORD ESSEX

and  
**J.H. SQUIRE**

The only Agency in London specialising in  
Ragtime Banjo Bands.

—  
You can hear our Bands at

Criterion, Piccadilly - Grand Hall 4 - 6

Selfridges 3.30 - 6

Corner House, Coventry Street 6 - 12

Trocadero, Shaftesbury Ave 11 - 12.15 p.m.

Maison Lyons, Oxford Street 4 - 6 and 7 - 9

Karsino, Hampton Court 8 - 10.30 p.m.

and at the

Popular Cafe, Piccadilly 4 - 6 and 7 - 9

the only Ladies' Ragtime Band to

appear before the public.

## BANJO PLAYERS WANTED

—  
Clifford Essex and J.H. Squire

Orchestral Agency Department,

15a Grafton Street, New Bond Street, W.1.

this evokes the questions: who were these bands; who played in them; and did they record?

Of the principals, Clifford Essex was essentially a promoter of all things banjo. He published many arrangements for banjo. Started the first banjo, mandolin and guitar orchestra in 1892. Formed the first 'Concert Party' - "Clifford Essex' Royal Pierrots" in 1891. Staged many concerts, and was instrumental in arranging Vess Ossman's tours of England in 1900 and 1903.

He joined with Alfred Cammeyer to produce the magazine *Banjo World*. They parted company and in 1903 Essex founded the magazine *B.M.G.* Illustrative of his rift with Cammeyer is a report of 1904 that Cammeyer was suing Essex for selling Cammeyer's musical compositions.

Essex' only known recordings are the private brown wax cylinders made by Tarrant Bailey Snr., at 32 Park Road, Bath,



Clifford Essex

[Somerset], at about the time of the Great War. he made no commercially issued cylinders nor 78's.

His partner, John Henry Squire, was in early life, something of a character - he joined the Royal Navy (where he learnt to play the cornet) and had been a boxer. In 1913, he founded his Celeste Octet and recorded many light classical pieces, together with a number of solo pieces for 'cello.

In 1911 he formed what he called a "jazz" band for the Golden Calf Club, Heddon Street, London, which was the centre for the Vorticist art movement. This band consisted of J.H. Squire ('cello, and leader); Victor Vorzanger (violin); Dave Comer (piano); and Burt Earle (banjo).

Six sides were recorded in 1913 by Pathé, under the title 'Burt Earle accompanied by His Anglo-American Orchestra' which is believed to be the band above. The titles were:

<i>When the Midnight Choo-Choo leaves for</i>	Pathe P8871
<i>Alabam'</i>	
<i>How do you do, Miss Ragtime?</i>	Pathe P8871
<i>The Wedding Glide</i>	Pathe P8872
<i>On the Mississippi</i>	Pathe P8872
<i>King Chanticleer Rag</i>	Pathe P8873
<i>The Bacchanal Rag</i>	Pathe P8873

The Karsino at Tagg's Island, Hampton Court, in the Thames was one of Fred Kano's enterprises for which in 1917 the Essex Squire Agency, in association with the pianists Harold Willoughby, provided a banjo band which recorded four sides for Edison Bell.

Among the personnel were Bert Bassett (banjo) and Harry Robbins Snr., (drums) recruited from the Savoy Quartet; and Chris Neale and Ben Williams (both banjoists) from Murray Pilcher's Sherbo Sextette.

A year later in 1918, J.H. Squire recorded a number of ragtime tunes, I see in Guardsman catalogues of the time, one example that is typical: *Dark Town Strutters' Ball*, on a 12 inch disc.

Recordings under the name of Squire's

Syncopated Orchestra on 12 inch Guardsman exist - to my knowledge at the moment - by repute. The only 12 inch Guardsman of Squire's "Karsino" Orchestra which I have found was of a double waltz played by a full orchestra of cornets, trombones, flute, piccolo, et al.

At Lyon's Corner House, Coventry Street, London, the Agency had a band consisting of: J.J. Ashton (banjo, leader); Carlo D'Armato (banjolin); Jack Rosen (violin); Dalton Mareshall (piano); and Joe Ball (drums). They recorded four sides for Edison Bell in 1918.

Jack Ashton was said to have an association with H.J.S. Booth, the proprietor of Lyon's Corner Houses and a director of Ashton's in Bond Street. However, there appears to be no connection with between Jack Ashton and the Ashton of Ashton and Mitchell's White Coons who played at the Carlton Club in 1919. I presume that 'Mitchell' was W.F. Mitchell of the Hammersmith Palais de Danse.

Carlo D'Armato, born in Naples in 1863, had come to England in either 1888 or 1889 and, as early as 1906, his Neapolitan Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra was engaged by Clifford Essex for a concert at the Kensington Town Hall.

His daughter Aida, on banjo, and his step daughter Elsa, on mandolin, were members of the Ladies Ragtime Sextette at the Popular Cafe, Piccadilly in 1918 - 1919.

Incidentally, J. Lyons and Co. Ltd., have confirmed that the provision of entertainment was an important element in the services provided at these cafes and restaurants at that time; and, over the years, they did operate a large Bands Department. However, that department was disbanded shortly after World War II [presumably with the introduction of 'Entertainment Tax' by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps, which would have made a cup of tea prohibitively expensive. -Ed.]. The company doubts that it would have maintained any written records for the period with which we are concerned.

The other agency band known to have recorded around that time was that of Ferdinand Hill's London Trocadero Band. There were eight sides issued in November 1919 by the newly formed Bulldog Record Company. The only known musician is Ferdinand Weist Hill himself, a violinist. The ragtime titles were:

<i>The Jazz Band</i>	Bulldog 650
<i>Hindustan</i>	Bulldog 651
<i>The Wild, Wild, women.</i>	Bulldog 652
<i>Après la Guerre</i>	Bulldog 653
<i>Everything is peaches down in Georgia</i>	Bulldog 653

During the later years of World War I and in the immediate post-war period, the core of musicians whose services were used by the Essex-Squire Agency were fairly peripatetic and the information available is some-what disparate.

At the Popular Restaurant, Piccadilly in August 1917, the band was said to be: Bert Bassett and Chris Neale (banjo); Harold Willoughby (piano); Dick de Pauw (violin)





Corner House Ragtime Band.

and Harry Robbins Jnr., (drums). In October 1917 J.J. Ashton was reported as playing banjo at the Karsino, Hampton Court. Meanwhile a ragtime quartet at Lyons Corner House, Coventry Street, London included Bassett and Neale; whilst in February 1918 it was the Sherbo Ragtime Sextette which included Chris Neale (banjo); Ted Coselli (banjo); Alex Wainwright (banjoline) and possibly Ben Williams (banjo). Come November 1917 and Chris Neale had been playing at The Trocadero, Shaftsbury Avenue (this would not be Jacob's Trocaderions which recorded for HMV and played lighter orchestral pieces.).

Back to October 1917, and at Maison Lyons, Oxford Street the band had included Ben Williams and Chris Neale (banjo) and Harry Robins on drums. Earlier in 1916-17 Bassett had been playing at the "400" Club with N. Novacs (banjo); Fred Arthur (piano) and Fred Wheelhouse (drums). It is reputed that Bert Bassett and Dick de Pauw recorded with J.H. Squire in 1918 on Guardsman.

Bassett in particular seems to have played all over the place.

According to *B.M.G.* in October 1916, he was with the French musical artiste "La Belle Leanora and her Ragtime Orchestra" at the Coliseum and the London Opera House.

April 1917 saw him at the Popular Restaurant. Piccadilly, October 1917 and he was at the Corner House, Coventry Street. He joined the Royal Navy in November 1917. By February 1918 Bassett was on sick leave from the navy, convalescing at Eastbourne. He had recovered by July 1918.

Previously, in an article in *Dallas' Musical Monthly* of June 1915, Bassett had stated that he had been playing with the Savoy Quartet for the previous 15 months. Playing at the Savoy Hotel from 7.30 pm to half-past midnight; and at Murray's Club from 5.30

pm to 7.30 pm every evening.

There is one further set of records which might include Bassett, and which are played in the style of the Essex-Squire Agency bands. This is the Banjovials Novelty Dance Orchestra which recorded for Pathé in about November 1919/ The surmised personnel is: Walter Larman or Dick (tenor); Bert Bassett and Chris Neale (banjo); Harold Willoughby (piano); and Harry Robbins Junior., (drums). Mention of the Savoy Hotel and Murray's Club; together with Walter Larman and Dick Langham would lead us to Dave Comer and Will Blanche; the groups at Murray's Club and the West End Dance Quartet - but that is another story.

EW  
*Acknowledgements: Steven Walker, Howard rye, Frank Andrews, B.M.G., The Era, Dallas' Musical Monthly, Banjo World, Melody Maker. Who's Who in Music, London 1935. J.H. Squire, autobiography, ".... And Master of None" 1937.*



## New Talking Device

*Development of the Panatrope.*

A DEMONSTRATION was given recently at the Savoy Hotel by British Brunswick, Ltd., of their new device for synchronising with kinema films, musical and all other sounds, which are to be obtained by the use of gramophone records played on Brunswick Panatropes.

It is claimed that kinemas which are equipped with Panatropes, and (as of course are all kinemas) projectors, have therein already ninety per cent. of the necessary apparatus, the cost of the synchroniser being, it was understood, only about ten per cent. of the cost of the Panatrope plus the projector, and easily fitted thereto.

The Brunswick Company stated at the same time that about one thousand kinema Panatropes had already been installed which, the Company believed, showed an economy of upwards of £250,000 to the kinema industry, while during the present year it was anticipated that a further two thousand would be installed. In addition to the very large revenue which would accrue to the Company from the supply of these Panatropes, it was anticipated that a revenue of about £200,000 per annum should be derived from the sale of their records to the film trade alone.

The new synchronising attachment has been registered as the Phototone and a company formed to exploit it made an issue of shares to the public which was very largely oversubscribed within an hour of opening. In that the Phototone apparatus depends upon gramophone records, musicians are comforting themselves with the reflection that it is an impracticable proposition either to fit pictures or, more difficult still, to solve the problem of the talking picture.

## The English 78 Picture Book by Don Taylor

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# From the 'fifties.

## John W Booth

Recently I was reminded that the nineteen fifties were forty or more years ago, basic arithmetic you may think, but many collectors either for reasons of personal vanity (the Dorian Gray syndrome), or in the belief that real music stopped at 1942. I have always held that *TMR* reflects most recording repertoires in the coarse groove era, with occasional forays into the modern world where the repertoire is definitely "retro". Here I should perhaps state that for the benefit of American readers especially, Britain was selling as many, if not more, 78s than 45s in the fifties. Certainly the EMI group companies were pressing shellac up to the death of 78s by the end of the nineteen fifties. Other labels were using vinyl for 78s and Decca had abandoned the 78 format by the middle of the decade. Accordingly here is a start to a new, regular, column "From the fifties", I hope that guest writers, and other readers will contribute to this column from time to time.

### Hopefuls

The fifties were not all rock 'n' roll, there were many artists who had successes with ballads, Latin American, big bands, and show/film music. Many names are still remembered, Ted Heath the band leader, Max Bygraves comedian and crooner, Ronnie Hilton now a presenter on BBC Radio 2 with his own fifties programme whose record on HMV of *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, marked the take off of his career and wider horizons than his native Leeds. Eartha Kitt is still singing sultry songs recently topping the bill on Channel 4 tv's "Viva Cabaret", possibly one of the last of the variety programmes to be found in Britain. Other names promised for stardom are now forgotten, writing in 1955 the music journalist Gee Nichol of the *Record Mirror* provided a glimpse into the future careers of some British hopefuls. Among those for whom the future held fame, if not lasting fortune, were Ruby Murray of course, Barbara Lyon - daughter of Ben and Bebe Lyon and more about her in a later issue hopefully - Edna Savage, Jill Day and Sheila Buxton popular presenter of her own programme on Radio 2 of the Big Band Era, of the men only Malcolm Vaughan seems to have stayed the distance.

Perhaps the answer to one of the questions of "Whatever became of...." is to be found in a profile of a Columbia artist, Rosemary Gaynor. Reputedly discovered by Ray Martin in his own offices, she was desperately shy, even so she seems to have taken the journey from somewhere in the north of England to London to find her fortune in the record business. However, so the story goes, she was too reticent to ask for an audition and took a job in the typing pool at Columbia Records biding her time before approaching Ray Martin. She recorded *Wheels of Love and Give a fool a chance* (Columbia DB3612), followed up in 1956 with *Ain't that a shame / A happy song* (Columbia DB3661 or SCM5196, 7" 45rpm.) the titles seem somewhat prophetic as none of them reached the charts and after that it looks like it was back to the typing pool.

Another Columbia hopeful was singing at Wimbledon Palais as Ray Miller by night and still had a day job in a laboratory. A change of name to Eddie Parker, a con-

tract with Columbia and Norrie Paramor launched him with the comment "Eddie has the kind of voice that could go places this year." (Col. DB3629 *Good luck to the bride / The engagement waltz*, and Col. DB3699 or 45rpm SCM5211. DB3804 *Love me as though there were no tomorrow / Rich in love* this latter disc recorded with the Eric Jupp orchestra, seems to be the extent of Parker's places in the lists.). The original article written in 1955 said that Eddie Parker was finding it tough to make ends meet before the beginning of the year, I hope that things were easier for him after his recording sessions.

### Norman Grant and Esquire

On the Latin American front I have a list of 78rpm recordings issued by Esquire Records Ltd., undated I place it in 1958. The whole output listed in this cyclostyled leaflet is by one Norman Grant and his Orchestra for Dancers. To give a flavour of the leaflet I'll quote from the introduction written by a certain Pierre, of whom I write later in this article. "Norman Grant is undoubtedly an outstanding musician as well as being a wonderful person. I know that he does a great job with English ballroom dances, but my particular knowledge is naturally of his work in the Latin-American field.

"In this sphere Norman has been a willing and apt pupil in my demands for the correct interpretation of the ballroom samba, rhumba, pasa doble, mambo and so on. The considerable success of his records - every teacher in the country must use them think - is due to this correct interpretation of the various rhythms.

"There is no doubt that he should be recognised as a force for Latin-American dance music in this country, and indeed for ballroom dance music as a whole. - Pierre."

Norman Grant is described in the leaflet as "Tall and well built, and looking several years younger than his actual age of forty-eight. He started piano playing in 1925 - when he was 15." [Hence my dating of 1958]. "Within the space of a mere five years he was running his own band, and even then it was one which specialized in music for dancing. Norman admits that occasionally the tempo may have speeded up in those early days, for the band was inexperienced, but at least he did realise that the most important thing for a dance band was to play at the correct tempo and with that lift which makes the dancers want to get up and on the floor.

"Norman Grant and his Orchestra for Dancers gained steadily in popularity. For a year, from 1951-52 his was the resident group at Oxford street's Academy Ballroom Club, and his engagement there ended only because he could not spare the time to play every night of the week. this period also marks his first association with Esquire records and with a certain Latin-American dance music expert known as just Pierre. the latter gentleman has introduced many a new number to the group's repertoire after one of his periodic visits to Cuba, and it is his schooling in the various rhythms which has given the band its pre-eminence in the Latin American dance music field.

"It is perhaps because he has other interests that Norman has retained such an unending love for his music. During the day he runs a thriving car hire business that operates no less than sixty cars and vans.

then, as if he has not got enough to keep him occupied, "Norman Grant is also a keen hydro-plane motor boat



racing enthusiast. In June he went to Cardiff to represent England in the Empire games gaining a well earned second place.

"Norman is thus absorbed in business, hydroplane racing and music. He obviously devotes all available energy to the one of this triad engaged in at any particular moment, otherwise how to explain his success in all three? But music takes pride of place, and it doubtless always will.

"To play immaculate dance music is his aim, music that is both pure toned and under perfect control. He feels that if there are too many notes the rhythm may get obscured, and with the dancers having to concentrate on what the band is doing they may be distracted from what they themselves are doing. The need for polish is particularly important on record where any little fault is amplified by constant repetition, and so again may prove distracting to the dancers.

"These are the musical aims of Norman Grant. He is rarely satisfied, but it seems that his listeners are. For his records are ever increasing in their sales, and not only to teachers and enthusiasts in Great Britain, but all over the world as well.

"At the moment the Norman Grant Orchestra is being used for the engagements of the Imperial Society of Dancing. A pleasing endorsement of the professional esteem in which Norman Grant is now held, and quite a compliment when one considers that the Imperial Society is the paramount organization of its kind in the world.

### *A list of Norman Grant's Esquire 78's*

#### *ESQUIRE RECORDS LTD.*

*Founded by the drummer Carlo Krahmer, Managing director, Esquire Records Ltd., 76 Bedford Court Mansions, Bedford Avenue, LONDON WC1. telephone number was MUSEum 1810.*

The company was originally established in 1947, and until 1949 pressings were in an early form of vinyl, then changed to shellac compound.

In Spring 1948 Esquire issued recordings of Humphrey Lyttleton's Band, Ronnie Scott, Bill Bramwell were also issued, and later Graeme Bell's Band.

#### **10" Red label series:**

*All issues as Norman Grant and His Orchestra for Dancers.*

- 5-083** 1951 No Orchids for My Lady (ft)  
Stars in My Eyes (wz)
- 5-094** 1955 Last Waltz selection - I'll see You  
Again, Time to say goodnight, Who's  
taking you home tonight  
You Go to my heart. (ft)
- 5-095** 1955 Sway (rhumba)  
Cumana (samba)
- 5-096** 1955 I'll Remember April (ft)  
The Touch of Your Lips (ft)
- 5-097** 1955 Anything Can Happen (rhumba)  
Caminando-caminando (rhumba)
- 5-098** 1955 Summer Night (wz)  
Be Mine (wz)
- 5-099** 1956 Life's desire (wz)  
Carisma (ft)

- 5-100** 1956 A Fine Romance (qs)  
Illusion (tgo)
- 5-101** 1956 Pour un oui, pour un non. (rhumba)  
Vae, vae, vae, amor. (samba)
- 5-102** 1956 Un Petit bout de satin (rhumba)  
Mansanille (mambo)
- 5-103** 1956 Please Hold Me Tightly (ft)  
You above all (ft)
- 5-104** 1956 Destiny (old time wz)  
New Empress Tango (square tango)
- 5-105** 1956? La Ultimo Noche (rhumba)  
Lolita (pasa doble)
- 5-106** 1957 Flamingo (ft)  
April In Paris (ft)
- 5-107** 1957 Let's Face The Music (qs)  
Shadow Waltz (wz)
- 5-108** 1957 Arrivederci Darling (rhumba)  
Mi Jaca (pasa doble)
- 5-109** 1957 Nuits d'Acapulco (rhumba)  
Manouna (samba)
- 5-110** 1957 Cuentame (mambo-cha cha cha)  
Somos (bolero)
- 5-111** 1958 Estoy contento (cha cha cha)  
Te Quiero Dijiste (rhumba)

#### **12" Red label series:**

- 6-001** 1952? Just a look, just a smile (wz)  
Time May change (ft)  
Arana de al Foche (tgo)  
Bingo selection (qs)
- 6-002** 1952? Paul Jones medley (pts 1 & 2)
- 6-003** 1952? Fascination (wz)  
The very thought of you  
Julian (tgo)  
Lover come back to me (qs)
- 6-004** 1952? Paul Jones medley (pts 1 & 2)

Norman Grant's recordings continued to be issued in microgroove form on the associated Starlight label.

### *Pierre*

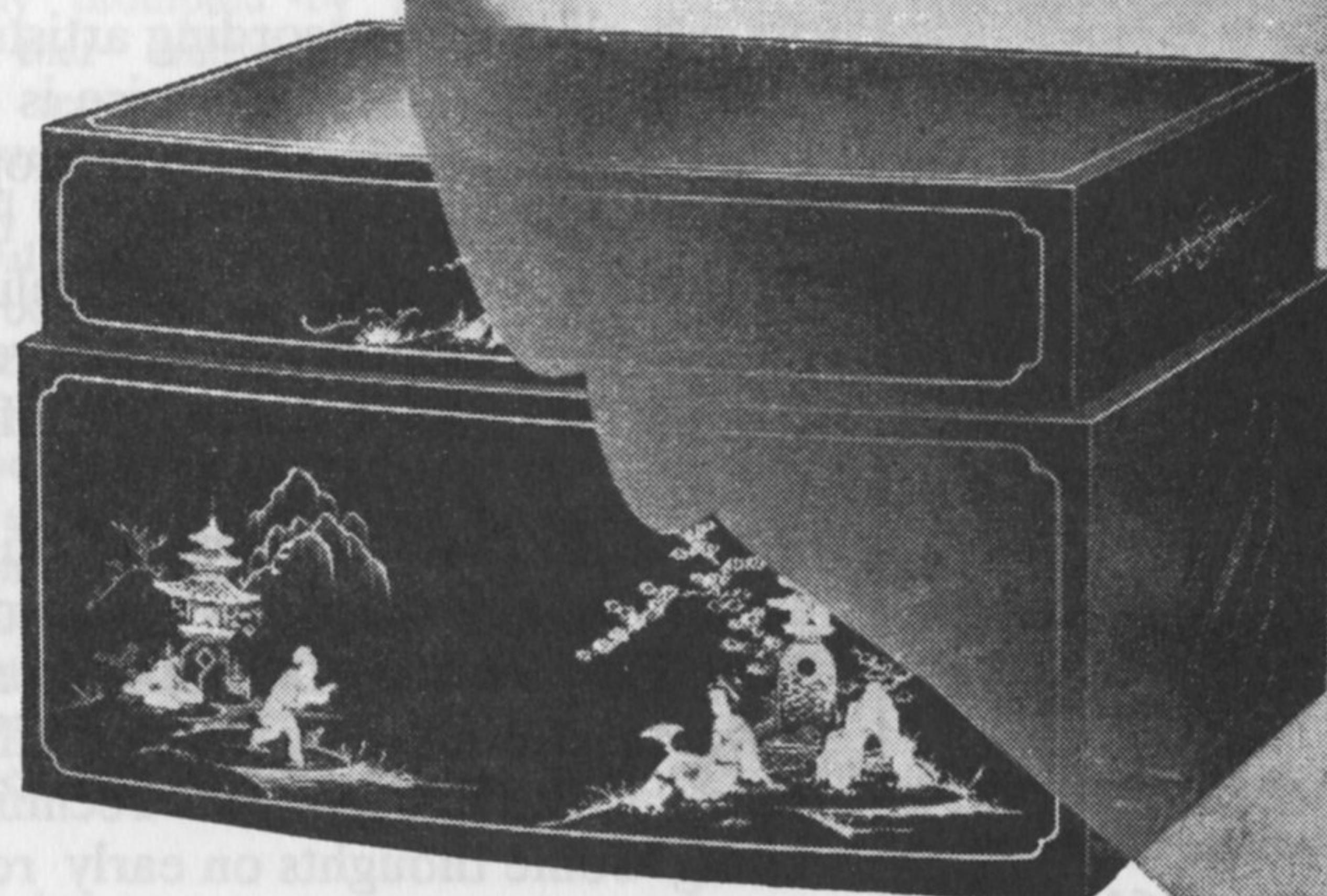
The only reference I can find to Pierre is on the reverse of an unusual special record pressed by Decca in the nineteen thirties : (mx CP572) *The Ballito Tango Instruction Record*. M. Pierre gives heavily accented spoken instructions on how to dance the Ballito Tango, with piano accompaniment by Jack Dent. Pierre is credited as "of the Regent Street School of Dancing". Perhaps anyone with more knowledge of the British ballroom dancing scene can provide further information of Monsieur Pierre.

The main side of this record (CP560-1) is titled *The Ballito Tango, slender silken ankles*. Written and composed by Annette Mills, (well known in the fifties for "Muffin The Mule") it is an advertising promotion for Ballito brand stockings. Played by David Java and his Tango orchestra, with vocal refrain by George Barclay and Annette Mills.

*Reference: Catalogue [ca. 1958] of Norman Grant's ballroom records, in the author's collection. TMR.62 p.1669 [Reg Cooper].*



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## Diary 1994 - 5

THE Talking Machine Review sales desk staff hopes to be in attendance at those events shown • and in bold type, most of these are advertised within *TMR* and you are referred to the adverts for full details. Other events may be included for information only.

Please do check with the organizers of any event listed before setting out on a long journey.

*TMR* can not accept responsibility for any changes made or cancellations made to any details or events after going to press. If you wish us to supply specific back numbers etc at any fair attended, please contact us beforehand to ensure that stocks may be available for you.

### September

25th •Fairfields Hall Croydon, £2.50 (9.30am); £1 (11.30am). Rob Marsden, 081 660 0407 see advert on back cover.

### October (The month for the Midlands!)

2nd •Birmingham International, National Motorcycle Museum, junction 6: M42/A45. £2.50 (10am); £1 after noon. D Spruce, 0923 237794 see advert on back cover.

8th Saturday Wolverhampton. St Mathews Church Hall, junction of East Park way & Willenhall Rd. (A454). 10am - 4pm. From M6 Junc 10 take A454 past Willenhall to Wolves. Details from Geoff Howl tel: 021 556-2434 (evenings only please)

29th Saturday Walsall Methodist Central Hall Community Centre, Ablewell St., Walsall, West Midlands. 50p all day (10am - 4pm) Junc. 7 M6 - 3 miles on A34 passes the hall: on the right of the road. John Baker (0922) 24641 or T Wilkinson (0562) 751527.

### November : Note change of date -

13th •Wimbledon Grandstand Lounge, Plough Lane, London SW17. Early adm. £2.50 (9.30am); 70p (11.30am). B Wilkinson, 0689 846516 see advert elsewhere.

### December : No entries

#### 1995 Dates for Wimbledon:

• Sundays - Jan 29th, April 16th, July 2nd, Sept 10th, Nov 12th.

#### 1995 Dates for Birmingham :

• Sundays - March 19th, July 16th, October 29th

Correct as at: 30/08/1994. E&OE.

## Other magazines reviewed

It was nice to see the latest issue of Martin Bryant's *New Amberola Graphic*, Spring 1994. Anyone interested in the series of Edison "Tone tests" carried out in the USA during 1921 will be very pleased to read a factual account of the experiences of Virginia Powell written by Raymond Wile. Part 3 of the RCA-Victor v. Columbia & Decca court case of the scarlet labels makes fascinating reading for historians. Theatre organ collectors are catered for with a lengthy discography and article on Jesse Crawford (Marsh "Autograph" Recordings from 1924, Domino, Paramount, Silvertone, Victor, and to finish with HMV London in 1933. (New Amberola Phonograph Co., 37 Caledonia Street, St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819, USA. \$10.00 for 8 issues outside the USA),.

A new magazine has made an appearance (well two to be exact as the Fall issue has just been published, and from that you will realise that it emanates from the USA) *Victrola and 78 Journal* is published by Tim Graycyk, 1901 Emory Street, San Jose, California, CA 95126. Tim has only just heard of *TMR* and kindly mentions us in his editorial, mindful of the problems of mutual backslapping I will just say "Thank you" and do the usual review of his offerings.

At a difficult size for European collectors to bind, 215mm x 170mm, it nevertheless is a worthwhile offering. Carrying book and CD reviews, reproduction adverts, articles about some less than well known recording artists - certainly as far as this reviewer is concerned - the repertoire is catholic in scope, all styles being given equal prominence. Tim hopes to have in future issues "items about labels, machines, and all types of 78s and artists--pioneer, Tin Pan Alley, opera, jazz, blues, hillbilly." So for an outlay of US\$4.00 per issue, four per year, there seems to be a promise from V78J of some extra US information.

*Hillandale News* for August (No. 199) has part 2 of Frank Andrews' history of the British record industry during the reign of King Edward VII (1901-10). The recordings of Ruth Vincent are covered in detail by Peter Cliffe; whilst for the very technical there is the first part of *Technical Jottings* by Denis Harbour, being "Some thoughts on early recording techniques".

For those readers familiar with *Storyville* magazine, but who are not regular readers, or who have missed reading warnings from the editor and publisher, Laurie Wright, here again is a reminder that the regular magazine will shortly cease publication and be replaced with a periodic hardback book subject to sufficient interest and support. No.159 carries a sample of the sort of material that Laurie intends to carry culled from his own *Encyclopaedia* files, being an addition to material in *Jazz records* concerning pianist Bobby Lee. Of particular note to *TMR* readers is a piece written by Hans Eekhoff and Spiegle Willcox concerning the latter's career with orchestras such as Paul Whiteman's Collegians and Jean Goldkette's.

The quarterly magazine of the *Vintage Light Music Society* for Autumn reached me today very pleasing to see a new typeface for this issue. I could not recall having heard of Felix King, however he did broadcast on BBC radio I may well have heard him on *Housewife's Choice*. There is a list of his recordings for Decca. An obituary to Anne Shelton also appears. Anne died of a heart attack on July 31st 1994. Contact VLMS. 4 Harvest Bank Road, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 9DJ.



# Amy Castles, a threat to Melba?

Paul Hartup.

Born Carlton Melbourne Australia, 1882;  
died 19 November 1951.

**A**my was born in the Melbourne suburb of Carlton, in 1882 three or four miles from Richmond where Melba was born. She was noticed at about the age of sixteen when she gave a series of concerts in Melbourne, Sydney and other Australian cities raising about £2000 for her studies abroad, which took her to Paris in 1899 at the age of seventeen. Where to her delight she was accepted by the great Matilde Marchesi, at that time seemingly the only singing teacher known to Australians due to her success with Melba. Surely Madame Marchesi possessed the key to the door of success for a budding diva from Australia?

## *Enter the foe - Melba!*

Unfortunately Marchesi did not agree with Amy's Australian teacher - E Allen Bindley - that she was a soprano; and consequently started to train her as a mezzo soprano, later changing within a few weeks to train Amy as a contralto. Some 18 months later Amy's mother arrived in Paris, appalled at the results of the *école* Marchesi, which in her opinion had nearly destroyed Amy's voice, she withdrew her daughter from Madame Matilde Marchesi's tuition. At this point Melba entered the fray and, presumably prompted by Marchesi, wrote from London to the effect that unless Amy returned immediately to Marchesi she would never be heard of again! However Amy and her mother persisted despite this intervention from the "ruler" of Covent Garden and the London operatic scene, eventually going to the highly successful and well respected Paris teacher Jacques Bouhy, - the Belgian born baritone creator of the role of Escamillo in *Carmen* in 1875 and who had previously taught in New York 1885-89 and 1904-07, - for corrective tuition. He restored her voice as a soprano taking about two or three years in the attempt. It is possible to speculate that some sort of alliance was at work between Marchesi and Melba to prevent the rise of another Australian soprano to challenge the supremacy of Melba, indeed Landon Ronald is reported - by no less than Melba - to have stated to Amy that she was unlikely to get into Covent Garden: Castles took this to mean that Melba would block her, as indeed she did later to Geraldine Farrar.

## *Operatic debut*

Subsequently to regaining her soprano voice she made concert tours of Australia, appeared in Concert in London all before 1907 when she at last made her debut in Grand Opera on the stage of the Opera in Cologne, Germany, as Ophelie in *Hamlet*, Juliette in *Romeo and Juliette* and Marguerite in *Faust*. Critics were surprised that she was not invited to London as her dramatic soprano voice with its coloratura flexibility was undoubtedly superior to the lighter voice of Melba.

In 1913 she was contracted by the Imperial Opera House Vienna for five years, unusually in those days of single season bookings. Here she was to sing Mimi - Melba's war horse - the heavy part of Madame Butterfly, Desdemona, the lighter parts of Marguerite and Juliette, with the very dramatic role of Tosca. The war of 1914 forced her to leave Austria for Australia abandoning her lucrative contract and her European career.

## *Retirement*

She never the less made herself a good solid working career in Australian concerts and oratorios through to the next World War when she decided to retire.

Her sisters Eileen and Dolly both enjoyed successful seasons at Covent Garden as second sopranos during the reign of Melba to whom they posed little or no threat. Younger brother George was also a successful professional singer in Australia.



## *The Gramophone Company recordings*

October 1906	London	(10")
8579 b	<i>L Serenate</i> (Gounod) (flute: Ei Hudson)	3654.
		(12")
702 c	<i>To The Angels</i> (Zardo) ('cello: WHSquire)	03068.
??†	<i>The Perfect Way</i> (Willeby)	03158.
December 1906	London	(10")
9007 b	<i>La Serenata</i> (Braga) ('cello: WHSquire)	3670.
		B.325
9009 b	<i>Wind In The Trees</i> (Goring-Thomas)	3667.
February 1907	London	
9011 b.	<i>Gilda's Air</i> (Rigoletto) (Verdi)	3674.
-	1908	London
10019 b.	<i>Angels Guard Thee</i> (Joselyn) (Godard) (w. 'cello)	3740.
		B.325
25 June 1909	London	
3174 f	<i>Bel Raggio lusinghier</i> (Semiramide) (Rossini)	2-053006
3176 f	<i>Merce Diletti Amici</i> (Vesperi Siciliani) (Verdi)	2-053007
3173 f	<i>Qui la Voce</i> (I Puritani) (Bellini)	2-053008

† I have been unable to trace a matrix number for this recording.



## Book Reviews

### *Jelly Roll, Bix, and Hoagy (Gennett Studios and the Birth of Recorded Jazz)*

by Rick Kennedy, foreword by Steve Allen, 256 pp, 6"x9" hard back, 21 b&w photos, append., notes, bibl., index.

Published 1 April 1994, Indiana University Press \$24.95 ISBN 0-253-33136-6

IN THE PUBLISHER'S 'blurb' this is described as ... 'long awaited by jazz enthusiasts': quite so. However I would have preferred to have waited for perhaps another six months and have had a little more icing on the cake. But that is to nit pick, certainly this story is the industrial history of recorded Gennett jazz, its core is based -as the title implies - on the seminal names so well known to jazz collectors.

his book is packed with minutia about the Gennett family, and I had often wondered where the label got its name from!. Harry Gennett was of Italian extraction a son in law of the founders of the Starr piano concern in Richmond, Indiana. In 1899 the Gennetts opened the 1,200-seat Gennett Theater in Richmond, forming the Gennett Theater Company in 1905. Active in the cultural life of the town, this explains the early releases of symphonic recordings on the Starr label in 1917.

I can do no better than quote from the book (page 12) in re-quoting the *Richmond Palladium* of 1913 "The Starr Piano Company and the cultural life of the community, in the latter's musical phases, have been inextricably interwoven from the beginning of the company's existence and are drawn closer with each succeeding year. ... Its effect is seen also in the large number of its employees and attaches who are among the city's leading amateurs and are included in its choral and orchestral organizations. The inter-relationship of the Starr Piano Company and the civic body in short, is one of the finest manifestations of our social life and should never be minimised...."

There is a good general potted history of the early patents wars in the USA, although I do detect some minor errors. The first Starr disc phonograph (Hill and dale cut) was made in 1916. Gennett made their first records in their New York showrooms at 9/11 East 37th Street, having bought up some bankrupt stock and studio equipment from a Boston company. Early pressings possibly done by Scranton Button works, but soon they were pressing their own discs at Richmond in 'Starr Valley'. By page 24 the author leads through the famous legal action of Victor Talking Machine v Starr Piano. Quoting here from original sources and not trotting out the usual quotes. He unravels the ties between Gennett and other labels.

By 1920 the Starr Piano Co., made 15,000 pianos, 3,000 disc phonographs and an astonishing 3 million discs. The repertoire including choral, sacred, popular, military bands, and instrumental records. There is a description of the legendary railroad track side studio, including how for sound insulation they hung a Mohawk rug on the wall. There are recollections of one of the 'recorders' (Rena Clark) and an insight into why, perhaps, a band would cut two sides per session. Ezra Wickenmeyer (the chief

engineer in the 1920's) explains about the company taking sound balance tests and of making as a policy three takes (-, -A, and -B) to cover for faults in the master plating processes, and the reasons for the destruction of some masters.

Artists were normally paid flat fees, or, rarely 1 cent per disc royalty.

By 1922 the company was worth \$7 million, and Fred Gennett supervised the recording activities after the death of Henry Gennett Snr.

The author has been able to quote many of the employees and some family members in interview, albeit many of the interviews were obtain many years after the events and so may not be totally accurate, but as Fred Gennett was notorious for not wanting to recall any events during his later years, brushing off many requests for information in the 1960's.

As is to be expected from the title there is a great deal of emphasis on the records made by Bix Beiderbecke, and why not?: the world would be a poorer place had it not been for the fortunes and openness of the Gennetts and their recording studio in Richmond. But there were other records made, sound effects were a long term mainstay of the company and of Fred Gennett on his *Speedy Q* label long after the closure of the Richmond factory, there was also a *Gennett Physical Culture* record, as well as custom pressings for the local Klu Klux Klan. The company seemed to have no problems in taking their money whilst recording and selling all those Black jazz and blues records the Gennett name is now synonymous with. Although it did cause Wickenmeyer to (temporarily) resign.

The origins of the *Black Patti* label (Fred Gennett and Edward Barrett of Paramount Records) as the Chicago Record Company from May 'til September, 1927 are also here. Although Gennett never rivalled Paramount, OKeh or Columbia in the blues recording field some of their Blues recordings were relatively significant. And like the jazz output seem to have been revered more this side of the Atlantic.

The sale of masters to various other companies and leasing of plant and facilities to US Decca is explained at length, although here again the author covers this aspect more than once and some rearranging of text is needed to unravel the full story. What is missing? Well I would have liked to have seen, as an appendix, a list of the Starr/Gennett labels arranged with a chronology and an indication of the catalogue number runs. The lack of matrix information is an unfortunate omission for latter day students. There is a short, selective, anthology of CD re-issues on the Milestone label, but little else to help the new reader to become a collector. If the book is aimed at existing collectors then the selective anthology of re-issues is incomplete. If however the book is intended as a document of Indiana industrial history, then it succeeds. As a company history, or as another insight into the legendary Gennett jazz recordings then it will add to existing studies, especially because of the new sources quoted within it. Some of the material here will be familiar to any serious jazz collectors, and it would have been good to have devoted a few more pages to the non-jazz output of Gennett. But what is most likely to undermine the scholarship of this otherwise excellent work is the lack of matrix numbers

throughout the book, a task that would not have been beyond a discographer with access to the Gennett ledgers.

There is a tendency by the author to treat subject matter in a non chronological sequence which personally I find annoying, but the inclusion of a good index - divided into topical subjects and music titles - means that this book will be used by researchers in the future. A thoroughly recommended book for discographers, record collectors and historians alike.

John W Booth.

### *The Sound and Vision Yearbook, 1994/95.*

Edited by Andrew Emmerson, 96 pages, A5, softbound,

Published by Sunrise Press, 2-4 Brook Street, Bampton, Tiverton, Devon. EX6 9LY available from the publisher at £3.50.

Subtitled 'A hobby & heritage directory for collectors of sound and vision technology', in its first year of issue, this directory is a development of the previous directory sold in conjunction with and at, the National Vintage Communications Fairs held at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Originally started by the organizer, Jonathon Hill.

Like most directories it is as complete and good as the information provided to the compiler. There are feature length articles written in the now commonplace "advertorial" style of free newspapers and national magazines. (including from time to time our own TMR) but such is the way of the modern world, when just about everything is sponsored or becomes an advertising hoarding, even wickets in cricket matches!

Nether the less this is not to detract from the usefulness of the book, it just so happened that on the day of writing this review I needed to find a professional video tape transfer company to transfer a reel of video tape from Philips 1500 series to a more useful modern format such as VHS, and lo! I found a company to do it within the pages of this directory, certainly *Yellow Pages* would not have helped here.

For the hobbyist there are plenty of headings to dive into: Cinemas, Classic Audio (ie Vintage hi-fi) Classic film, and includes an entry for our friends at *Memory Lane* magazine.

Under Gramophones and Phonographs a comprehensive listing of the magazines including TMR, many dealers of machines, but not records! Save for Nauk's of Texas! Jukeboxes, Light Music including the Robert Farnon Socy. who are importing CDs of *Orchestre Mascotte* from France, see elsewhere in this issue. Magic Lanterns, Offshore and Pirate Radio (remember Radio 390?), Phonecards, Radar, TV the list goes on.

It takes all day to cruise around the stalls at this fair and even then you feel that you have missed something, well if that happened to you, or if you want to sample the flavour of the fair, then this booklet will do it for you.

Criticisms for the next edition? Well yes, please can we have an index of addresses and a slightly less "black page" look? I know that with late booking advertisers - and TMR is exception, - sorry Andrew and Jonathon - production of these type of publication is not easy. It is all worth the £3.50. Jack Bittesby



## FRANK MUNN - A BIO-DISCOGRAPHY by RODNEY STEINER and THOMAS A. DELONG

THE AMERICAN BRUNSWICK catalogue of 1927 said of Frank Munn - "One of the sweetest, most intimate tenor voices today, is possessed by Frank Munn. Munn is little known through personal appearances but through the medium of recorded sound, his voice has entertained countless thousands". The reference to the lack of personal appearances is a significant one.

Munn's professional life was split between the radio stations and the recording studios and outside of that his determination not to make public appearances encompassed an embargo on the odd song at parties and a failure to join other stars in entertaining the troops in World War 2.

But for an accident to his hand Munn's life would almost certainly have followed a different course and he would have ended up as an unknown engineer, with a mundane suburban life, watching sport on the TV and going to the races and the football games.

The second part became a reality but when his injury prevented him from continuing as a machinist he decided to try and earn a living using a natural singing talent with which he had previously entertained friends and the general public as an amateur. He had almost no formal training but his innate talent carried him through his singing career with the minimum of rehearsals. His popularity was also helped by his policy of sticking to the 'good old good ones' and not attempting too many new songs.

Although many of his records were issued here his name is little known among collectors and I wager that not too many are aware that the HMVs as Paul Oliver are also by Munn, the name he was given when he worked on the Palmolive Radio Programme. In America his popularity was based both on his radio shows and his records, and he was regularly voted among the top ten male singers. His absence from the public stage also undoubtedly helped as his listeners could create their own personal image of him in their own minds. When studio audiences were tried out one woman loudly complained - "My God, I had no idea how fat and funny looking he was".

In July 1945, with TV imminent, Munn suddenly quit at the age of 51 and there were no comebacks. Although Munn appears to have been a professional singer by default rather than choice his story is nevertheless an interesting one as told by Messrs Steiner and De Long. We learn a good deal about the Brunswick Musical Director Walter Haenschen, better known as Carl Fenton, and other recording artists such as Elizabeth Lennox, James Melton and Virginia Rea. You certainly don't have to be a Frank Munn devotee to find this book interesting.

There is a discography occupying over 40 pages which includes the vast bulk of his recordings but which unfortunately contains quite a few errors. Munn auditioned twice for Edison in 1924 and the discography states that Edison made an error in not following up the tests and letting Brunswick record him two years before Edison. Unfortunately for that theory the first Edison they list was recorded in 1924 and not 1926.

The compilers state that they decided to omit all European issues but then include English Panachord and also several English Brunswick issue numbers which they confuse with American issue numbers, sometimes listing the English issue as the original American. Some Brunswick recording dates are wrong and one or two non vocal masters appear to have been included. Frank Dutton, a Brunswick expert, and I have checked through the discography and will be sending on our findings to the compilers.

Despite the errors in the discography which are unlikely to upset the Munn enthusiast I would recommend this book for the light it throws on the activities of this singer and his radio and recording contemporaries. So many first hand accounts are fascinating and difficult to find.

The book is a paperback, 133 pages, illustrated and is published by Sasco Associates, P.O. Box 335, Southport, CT 06490, USA. I do not know whether it is available in this country but it can be obtained from Martin Bryan, The New Amberola Phonograph Company, 37 Caledonia Street., St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819 for \$12.50 plus postage of \$1.25 in America. (I would imagine he would be happy with \$15 from English customers.

Martin is the editor of the *New Amberola Graphic*, a fascinating magazine for record collectors.

ARTHUR BADROCK.

## Record Review

### British Film Music from the 1940's & 50's.

Immediately sound was striped onto films, composers were drawn in to provide musical backgrounds to "non-musical" films to heighten the emotions or sympathies of the audiences. It became a distinct craft. Fortunately, a large proportion of the themes and main parts of this period was captured on record. This CD preserves important music by mainly British composers, available only on 78s - and one EP - elsewhere. In style it leans towards the 'classical'. It is only possible here to list the contents, composers and performers because a full review of each piece would be forbiddingly long.

"The Way to the Stars" - Film themes (Nicholas Brodzky 1905 - 1958), Two Cities Symphony Orchestra, cond. by Charles Williams = Col. DB2180 (1945). "Blythe Spirit" Prelude and Waltz. (Richard Adinsall, 1904-77). L.S.O. cond. Muir Mathieson, = Col. DX1186 (1945). "The Night Has Eyes", theme. (Charles Williams 1893 - 1978), Queen's Hall Light Orch. cond. Charles Williams = Col. DB22772 (1946). "Western Approaches" Seascape. (Clifton Parker 1905-89), LSO cond. Muir Mathieson = Decca K1544 (1945). "The Passionate Friends" - Film themes. (Richard Adinsall) The Philharmonia Orchestra cond. Muir Mathieson = Col. DX1551 (1948). "The Man Between" Theme (John Addison, born March 1920), Ron Goodwin Concert Orchestra = Parl. R3775 (1953). "The Sound Barrier" Rhapsody op. 38, (Malcolm Arnold, born Oct. 1921), RPO cond. Malcolm Arnold = Col. SED5542 (1957). "A Matter of Life and Death" Prelude, (Allan Gray 1902-73), The Queen's Hall Light Orch. cond. Charles Williams = Col. DX1320 (1946). "A Kid For Two Farthings" Theme (Benjamin Frankel) 1906-73). George Melachrino and His Orch. = HMV B10903 (1955). "Hungry Hill" Waltz into Jig (John Greenwood 1889 - 1975), LSO cond. Muir Mathieson = Decca K1579 (1946). "The Rake's Progress" Calypso music (William Alwyn 1905-85) LSO cond. Muir Mathieson = Decca K1544 (1945). "Wanted For Murder" A Voice In The Night (Mische Spoliansky 1898 - 1985), The Queen's Hall Light Orchestra cond. Charles Williams = Col. DX1264 (1946). "Ha'penny Breeze" -theme. (Philip Green 1911-82) Philip green and his orch. = Col. 1724 (1950). "Carnival" Intermezzo, (Nicholas Brodzky) Two Cities Symphony Orch. cond. Chas. Williams = Col. DB2225 (1946). "Scott of the Antarctic" -prologue, Pony March, Penguins Climbing the Glacier, Final Music. (Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872 - 1958) The Philharmonia Orchestra, cond. Ernest Irving = HMV C3834 (1948).

I find that I have to add some treble boost to the 1940's recordings; this might be due to an original lack, or the method of transfer. the excellent booklet of notes contains details of composers, conductors, brief film synopsis and 'stills' from each film. A very pleasing and important re-issue. EMI CD.GO 2059 (8-28844-2). E.B.

For lovers of film music other examples on CD by Sidney Torch, George Melachrino and Charles Williams have been reviewed in these columns previously.

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# Record reviews

Diamond Cut Productions have released their second CD of Edison needle (lateral) cut electric recordings, this time featuring a full 65 minutes of Edison test pressings of *The California Ramblers*.

The Ramblers were, as has been recounted several times by my colleague Arthur Badrock, a series of bands with differing personells over their years of existence. Included in the line-up over the years were Red Nichols, the Dorsey brothers, Glen Miller, and my own favourite, Adrian Rollini. Their recordings were released under a variety of pseudonyms as well as their own name.

The repertoire varied although almost exclusively based upon standard hits and stock arrangements of the day, they played in a style that has become legendary for its freedom and improvisation. The use of the word arrangement has been often misunderstood, as Joachim Berendt wrote in his seminal *"Jazz Book"* over forty years ago: "There is a tendency to speak of arrangements only when something has been written down beforehand. But it is easy to see that it is actually only a question of procedure whether a certain passage actually has been written down in advance or has merely been discussed. Arrangements begin the moment something is agreed upon in advance. It is immaterial whether this is done in writing or orally." A nice, if somewhat legalistic definition, and I suppose one that would be argued against by many modern musicians, jazzologists and students of the genre; but it is accurate enough for me, taken within the context of the time he was writing and of the times that he and I are writing about.

To say that the Ramblers were influential is an understatement, to say that they were corny is less than the truth, they were successful. And that my friends is what it is all about, success. Ed Kirekby, he of the uncertain vocal range, (by that I ask was he tenor, counter tenor, alto or just sometimes given to *faltissimo*?) was an astute manager and he would not have backed them if they were not a success right from their formation in 1920. After all he later managed Fats Waller.

This compilation of unreleased material recorded by the Edison company dates from November 1928 to September 1929, the titles are nothing new, indeed some of the arrangements are familiar, but not mere facsimiles of Tin Pan Alley. All good stuff this, and can anyone put me anywhere near a modern band to emulate this sound? In these personnel are included Miff Mole, Fred Van Epps Jr., Chick Condon, Chauncey Gray, Smith Ballew, Adrian Rollini, Glenn Miller and of course Ed Kirekby among others.

Diamond Cut Productions has now obtained the support of the Smithsonian Institute Press and have promised another release later this year. The transfers are excellent, surface noise of the original source materials kept to a minimum, but not to the detriment of the recording, in fact the levels of noise reduction sensibly vary from track to track and there is no discernable echo on this CD, something I found an annoyance on the first CD from Diamond Cut Productions (reviewed in *TMR* 82).

There is a well written booklet by Richard M Sudhatter of the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University, which includes a full list of the players for each track. A criticism here, Diamond Cut have used the familiar technique of starting with a full list of personnel for track one and as the tracks progress chronologically so only the changes are detailed, very much in the style of Brian Rust's discography. Result is that I, being of an artistic nature and not given a mathematician's brain, have difficulty working out who is playing what by track 21. I appreciate that the CD booklet format causes designers a few typographical nightmares, but I do wish that ALL producers would stand firm on this one and endeavour to get the designer to forsake this easy option and go for the clarity standard, and list each track either in its entirety or only list just changes for up to three occasions.

It can be done, I have at least one CD in my collection of jazz material that has overcome the problem, and I am willing to show how it can be done.

These are the tracks by titles and matrix numbers as given in the notes: 1: Me and the man in the moon; N-565A. 2: You're the cream in my coffee; N-566B. 3: Along came sweetness; N-636B. 4: Button up your overcoat; N-710B. 5: Guess who; N-745B. 6: When I'm walking with my sweetness; N-777B. 7: Sunrise to sunset; N-840C. 8: My sin; N-869G. 9: Wishing and waiting for love; N-938C. 10: Broadway baby dolls; N-939C. 11: Tiptoe through the tulips; N-981B. 12: Someday you'll realize you're wrong; N-1012B. 13: The song of the blues; N-1053B. 14: Broken idol; N-1054A. 15: Ain't misbehaving; N-1084B. 16: Counting the stars alone; N-1128B. 17: Pretty little you; N-1129B. 18: Love ain't nothing but the blues; N-1162A. 19: Lady luck; N-1193C. 20: I'm a dreamer, aren't we all?; N-1194C.

Track by track comparison I will avoid, as I would need to go through just about all my other Ramblers' material, but here are some highlights and some others. Track 7 suffers from a poor original recording, but it is very well worth the inclusion. Track 14 "blasts" somewhat on the cymbals crash in *'Broken Idol'*, and I assume that this is the reason that Edison did not release it. Track 16 is listed as an "unknown" for the vocalist, but it does sound like Ed Kirekby to me, I would like to know if the personells were taken from Edison ledgers at Orange - and Ed K. was not listed - or were they identified from Brian Rust's book as I suspect, the booklet does not make this point. Track 20 on my review copy had an unfortunate "glitch" a fault in this particular copy I hope and a product of manufacturing. But don't let this put you off buying this great transfer of pretty rare material. To their credit Diamond Cut Productions exchanged the offending disc for a good one, - if anyone had to get the one that got away, it would be me!

**The California Ramblers Edison Laterals 2. CD DCP-301D.**

Cost of this CD in the US and Canada is \$17.98 + \$2.00 shipping, in Europe add \$4.00 shipping. from Diamond Cut Productions, PO Box 305, Hibernia, NJ 07842-305 USA.

John W Booth

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The Balitio Tango - a 78 10" recording I do not know any more than that, except that I assume it was from the 'thirties, possibly Decca? Paul Hartup, 29 Munford Drive, Swanscombe, Kent. (87+)

George Formby on Columbia DD.444, I think this may have been for export only, poss. Canada "Our Sargent Major"/ "They Can't Fool Me". (CAR.5068-2/CAR.5069-2) R Thacker,

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2. THE PHONOGRAM - reprint of 3 extremely rare  
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3. Edison Bell WINNER Records. Newly revised  
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